

1657

THE  
Free Grace of God  
To all the Sons of Adam  
**VINDICATED**  
And the Arguments written by Mr.  
James Rawson, a National Minister, for per-  
sonal Election, confuted.

The Scriptures by him urged, examined, and  
answered, and the truth of that Doctrine fully  
cleared.

Whereunto is added, Twenty Queries to all men  
concerned.

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By Thomas Taxwell, the meanest and unworthiest of all  
Gods Servants.

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Rev.22.17. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life  
freely.

July 1657

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Entered according to Order, Octob. 8. 1656.

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LONDON.

Printed for Francis Smith in Flying-Horse-Court in Fleet street,  
and Steven Dagnal of Alesbury, 1657.

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2. SOG

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1871-1872. 1872-1873. 1873-1874.

25. *Abies* *hastata* *var.* *spicigera* *edulis*  
var. *hastata* *var.* *spicigera* *edulis*

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## To the Reader.

Courteous Reader,



Hoſeover thou art, that ſhall read theſe  
Lines, I deſire thee in love, diligētly to  
conſider of the ſame, and wotio ſleight or  
rejeſt it, because of the meanness of the  
Authoſ, becauſe bee is none of thoſe that  
are the wiſe men after the fleſh, nor yet  
noble in the account of thiſ world, I Cor. i. 26. but one that  
hath learned to become a fool that he may be wiſe, I Cor. 3. 18.  
and therefore deſire thee to learn from the words of Paul, Rom.  
12. 16. Not to minde high things, but condescend to  
men of low estate, neither be wiſe in thy own conceit,  
but read it with a ſingle eye, and let the Word of trut̄h be thy  
guide, and thou wiſt be noble in ſearching the Scriptures, to  
prove whether theſe things contained in the following Diſ-  
course, are trut̄hs or not, which is a plain Vindication of Gods  
free love to the ſons of men, but much oppoſed by many of the  
blinde, ignorant, and ſelf ſeeking Priests of thiſ Nation, and  
being ingaged in thiſ matter, I thought it my duty to appear  
for the trut̄h againſt James Rawſon, and to anſwer his Ar-  
gumentis, but I ſhall not do it in Hypothetical or Catagogical  
Argumentis, and ſuch like Sophiſtry, as he haſt brought forth  
to cloud and darken the plain trut̄h of Gods univerſal love as  
it is declared in the Scriptures, being fully perſwaded that it  
is the minde and will of God, that the Gopſel of hiſ Son  
ſhould bee preached with all plainneſſ of ſpeech, that ſo

To the Reader.

persons of all capacities should understand. Therefore kind Reader, I hope that thou wilt not look for excellencie of speech, or enticing words of mans mischaine, but the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power, with sobrietie and soundnesse.

So leaving the effects of what is written to the blessing of that God, whom I serve in zeal and sincerity, and to thy serious consideration,

I remain

Thy truely loving Friend,

**THOMAS TAZWELL.**

From Whiz-Church the 6<sup>th</sup>  
day of the 8<sup>th</sup> Month,  
1656.

The



TO THE  
Inhabitants of the Parish of Whit-  
*Church* in Dorset-shire.



Ad hath been your experience, together with mine, of the great enmity that some of you had (and I doubt still have against mee) for (proclumming as you say) to preach in your publick Meeting house. True it is, that there was an opportunity given into my hands, unsought for, and should I have slighted it, it might have been required at my hands. But, for as much as you refused, and would not hear the Word of the Lord, because it came not from the mouth of your Priest, the guilt bee upon your owne heads. I am free. But, the continuation of my practice, in order to preaching in your publick Meeting house, did very much inflame the blinde zeale of *Henshie* and *Dorrell*, together with others, and thanby the instigation of *Bennet*, and others, that nothing less would satisfie, or quench the flame of their *Jeihu*-like zeal, but the casting my body in prison, which so accomplish, did also all meane possible, supposing that it had been my aime and end to have gotten your Vicarage, but

therin you were exceedingly mistaken, for could I  
have dispensed with my conscience to intend for good  
ward, I might for some years ago have been sent to the  
Parsonage, being three times strongly periwaded there-  
unto, and to very considerable places; to which I might  
also adde a fourth, and that at the very time when I  
preached in your publick Meeting-house, which was to  
~~Chardstock~~ in ~~Somersetshire~~ by Mr. John ~~as farre as hee could~~  
half of his brother Mr. Lawrence Squiff of London: And  
for proof of the trath of what I lay, that so your  
mouths may be stopped, take a true Copy of my Let-  
ter to him in that case.

**I** cannot forget those many and undeserved, and unmerited  
disgraces of late and the many labours where when I have  
told you I should see pleasure in a copy of all my life's work  
which you can now find in a plentiful book. But I cannot dispense  
with my conscience, so embraceth all you that have had so  
abuse proffer made. Indeed the temptation was of late so  
powerful, and now glorie more than once appeared, and I could  
not but thoughts of it; my conscience ready to strike me  
my face, what shall make me ashamed of the works of men  
and yet with a poorness of soul had God saye unto me  
God for biddest me to do this, why of necessitye must I do that  
for his word commandeth me to do this, and if I do not it  
chanceth, and before long, to have my selfe  
blowne by mens malitiaments, and thereby get myselfe  
seen, and to encreasings a scorne, and bring up my and others  
dreadfull persecutions, and my selfe, who am weary and  
tired and Naturall as man is, therelike dares not be comfaynt  
the similitude of the world's follishe hearts might not be vident  
withe the deceitfulness of Babylon's painted beauty, and seem-  
ing.

ingnishes, which is beset with the apparel of Sodome, full of  
bravet and asber, then it will infect and poison the souls of men.  
Therefore kee it far from mee to preach for reward; and build  
against that whiche I have destroyed, and do that for which I  
have no ground for in the Scripture; I should thereby craue  
the name of God to bee blasphemed, the Gospel of Christ to bee  
well spoken of, and the professors thereof to be reproached; yea  
also, and my selfe to bee ashamed, because I should thereby  
manifest my selfe a postinge, yea and a principle of Atheisme.  
The Lord give us more grace, that some may persevere in the  
way of truth, For so is the will of God, that with well-  
doing, wee might put to silence the ignorance of foolish  
men, 1 Peter. v. 1. I am consented with the condition that I  
am called unto, therein patiently to wait for the commynge  
of the Lord Jesu. *(W<sup>m</sup> has scribbled over this and said)*  
and hast too bin bold ene to remoue me from my  
bentoleggs evyn yesterye (laste yere in the first Mayne) &  
all hys (provaientmables) still remayn of yore  
evyl. And as he benseton me selfe yore of evyn  
christmase yea not been farr off. And yd remayned on  
yore 13. yere yore, ha<sup>t</sup> Sir, visit and of comynge to  
yore 14. yere yore, to ouer yd, in godlynesse yore  
yore 15. yere yd beval and **Not unworthy Servante;**

*Thomas Tazell.*

and also by his booke of 1611. yore 1611 anno 51  
**From Hescher the 10. day** of January 1611. yore 1611  
**of the 8. Moneth.** And hys yore 1611 in yore 1611  
yore 1611. yore 1611. yore 1611. yore 1611. yore 1611. yore 1611.

Some of you seemed also (and I doubt still are) offend-  
ed with mee, because I told you, that Blaickstone was a

Liar, be ye your selves judges, what did he less, when  
hee told you in the Pulpit, That Christ never intended  
by his death to save sinnes, but the Elect, and also  
that the Fountaine of Grace was shut unto Sinners, and  
to those that was not elected.

Consider, and judge with understanding, and let  
*Blackstone* prove if hee can; That God did from all  
eternity, elect some persons meerly considered as per-  
sons, and reprobated others, meerly considered as they  
were persons, without respect to abadience or disobe-  
dience, when the Scriptures of truth saith, *Hee that be-  
leeveth, and is baptized shall bee saved, but hee that believeth,  
not, shall bee damned,* Joh. 3. 3 2. Rom. 1. 21. 26,  
28.

Let him tell mee, if hee can, Why Christ dyed,  
if not to save sinners? for the Elect did not need him  
(if you will take it in his sense) for they were appointed  
before to Eternal life (as hee would have it) and sin-  
ners, to wit, those that are not elected, as hee saith, have  
no benefit by him, What need then for a Fountaine  
of Grace to bee freely opened, when as the Elect  
are saved without it, by vertue of Election, and those  
that are not elected cannot bee saved by it in *Blackstones*  
sense.

Mind your friends, what absurdities and contra-  
dictions these are, sad ones indeed, and yet pass for  
sound orthodox truths unquestioned amongst you in QH  
men! blinde in heart, and dull of understanding,  
and glutted in your ignorance: Your Shepheards have  
caused you to go astray. See Jerem. 50. 6. Your Prophets have  
damed with untempered morter, seeing vanity, and divining  
lies unto you, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord  
will to thine L4. 22. 24. Oh, I know I can thinke  
visit.

Oh my Friends! and some of you my near Relations: How long will you withstand the free tenders of Gods general love, and foolishly follow the lying vanities of your blinde, ignorant, and selfish Priests, fifty years and more, one preached unto you, and at last for the gaine of the things of this world left you, whom hee said, were his sheep, and the Holy Ghost had made him your Overseer; yet I say, and you know, that hee left his sheep to the violence of the wild Boar of the Forrest; thus he did evidently demonstrate himself to bee a hireling, for the hireling flyeth, but the good shepheard layeth down his life for his sheep, Joh. 10. 11,12. Now to whom of you, or to which of you can he lay, as Paul said, 1 Cor. 9. 2; You are the seal of my Apostleship, or whom, or which of you hath he begotten through the Gospel, or by his ministry, 1 Cor. 4. 15. or whom amongst you is converted to the faith, and order of the Gospel, by the ministry of Dammar; call to mind, and seriously consider what the Prophet saith, Jer. 23. 9. If they had stood in my counsel, then should they have profited my people, &c.

Dammar also handled the same point before you of Election, and Reprobation, but very confusedly, and much to the dishonour of God, stopping (as much as in him lay) the free current of Gods general love to the sons of men, in that he said, that all had a benefit by the death of Christ, yet Christ never purposed to save all, or that all might be saved by his death, but the benefit that they had was in this life only (as he said). 1. That they had a being. 2. That the Gospel should be preached unto them; and 3. That they should have an interest in the Resurrection; now you may a little examine, and let your spirits be unbiased, and seriously consider, that you may bee able to judge what benefit it can be for a man to

be partaker of the things of this life; and be damned for it hereafter; were it not farre better for such a one that he had never had a being? And were it not farre better for poor Creatures, never to hear the Gospel preached, than to hear it preached, and so bee damned for hearing of it? judge you alio, whether it were not farre better for poor souls for ever to sleep in the dust, than to be taile to Judgement; yea to bee damned and tormented in Hell for evermore; and if all this bee brought up on the non-elected, by the death of Christ in ~~Damnis~~ sense, as it doth follow in his late laid Doctrin, then it had been farre better for them never to have had a being; yea, it had been farre better that Christ had never dyed; and that the Golpel had never been preached unto them, and that they had never been raised out of the dust, but have slept there to eternity; that they might never have come to Judgement, and bee tormented in Hell for evermore. But I cannot stand at present to dispute the Point with thise men, there is another that is come upon the Stage, namely, *Famos Ranson*.

The Parson of *Hassellbury-Briars* in *Dorsetshire*, hee hath been medling with some of my Papers which are abroad in Friends hands, and hath written very high Challenging Arguments in Logick, and Sophistry (~~against~~ some of my Positions) and indeed his Language doth very much favour of a vain mind, full of bitterness and reproach, but I shall not render to him rayling for rayling, nor evil for evil, but shall endeavour to overcome his evil with good, and with all mildnes of speech, reply unto his Arguments, shewing you the fallacy of his Arguments; and how he endeavoureth by Art, and Humane strength to darken the Truth, as it is in Jesus, which you shall plainly see, and finde in the following

following Discourse, which I would desire you to  
read without partiality, and search the Scriptures  
with unwearyed patience, and if any of you have the  
least benefit thereby, give God the praise; and he that  
wisheth you well hath his desire; and I am your de-  
spised Neighbour, and my name is called

*Thomas Tazwell.*

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etiam quod ad hanc i. nichil admodum. Cuiusmodi  
est enim i. dicitur hoc, quidamque monachus  
vixit, et regnabat eis dominus regnorum nostrorum  
in terra, quis est ergo? Quis enim regnus si non regnum  
dei? Et hoc Iesus dicit: sed etiam Regnum nostrum  
destinatur ex parte vobis, quae est regnum dei.

# The Free Grace of God to all the Sons of Adam vindicated, and James Rawsons Arguments for particular Election confuted.



You say, That you cannot much wonder, that the Grandees of this Nation have seemed to wink at that which you are pleased to call, The spreading Errors of these times, &c. and the reason you seem to urge is, That doubtless (say you) such Meeters (and what you are pleased to call them) are more easily suppress by flighting, and the like, than by strength of opposition, &c.

*Answer.* I must tell you, that I do as little wonder as you, that the Grandees of this Nation, are not persecuting of people for their Conscience in matters of Religion; but I am perswaded the reason is, because that doubtless they in their grave Wisedomes have seen that such a practise in them that were before them, being not a little deluded by your Fathers the Bishops, and their Adherents, did thereby beat down the truth under the name of Heresie, and doubtless they have learned, that it is the Pierogative Royal of Jesus Christ, to rule in the Consciences of men in the things which concern his own Kingdom; And that the Wheat and the tares should grow together in the world untill the harvest, Mar. 13. 29, 30. And therefore they have tolerated all Religions that live peaceably in the Commonwealth, except Popery and Prelacy, whose principles and actions also have been made appear to bee against the present Government.

But this toleration or liberty, for people to worship God according to the light they have received, without having things imposed upon their Conscience, contrary to what they believe, is that which serveth not your turn, for **TAKE HIM GAOLER** is the best argument with you to convince the rude multitude of carnal-minded and self-seeking people, who are resolved to bee of that Religion, in which they can bee best freed from trouble: And as you that are called the Clergy, to bee like the reed in the Tide, to turn as the Tide turneth, and that in a moment from Episcopacy to Presbytery, if it bee but once sign'd by humane Authority, and have the stamp of a Parliament upon it, so that

you are indeed but the Parliaments Prophets, and the peoples Prophets, and not the Lords Prophets, for you obey the Parliament, and turn this way and that way, even as they direct you, and you study to preach such things as are pleasing to the rich men of your Parishes, laying aside the Commands and Oracles of God, yet you are so impudently bold, as to say, **THE LORD SAITH IT, when the Lord hath not spoken, Ezek. 22.28.**

But wee have learned, 2 Cor. 10.4,5. *That the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* And where wee read of the whole Armor of God that the Saints are to put on, Eph. 6.11,12,13,14, &c. there is not any mention, nor the least intimation of a sword of steel, or armor of flesh, nor any carnal weapons whatsoever; but the spiritual wayes of Jesus Christ expressed in the New Testament, must bee defended with spiritual weapons, notwithstanding all that can bee said to the contrary, by you which desire to have those wayes and works, which are devised by men, and found in the Testament of Christ, to be upheld by an earthly power.

And whereas it is by you said, *That it is very visible to all exact beholders or observers, that those who were the prime promoters, incendiaries, and blew the coals first of those strange opinions, have withdrawn themselves, &c.*

Now if by strange opinions, is meant the universal love of God manifested to the sons of men in the death of his Son, as a way and means, by which glad tidings of great joy is held forth to all people, and the baptizing such in the name of the Lord Jesus, who confess faith in him, then you are much mistaken, for these are not strange opinions, but precious truths which concern the salvation of every man and woman in the world, witnessed by the holy Prophets, by Christ himself, and his Apostles, which have been the prime promoters of the same.

The former is witnessed by Isa. in Chap. 53.4,5,6. Where it plainly appeareth that the iniquity of all that went astray, are laid on him, that is, on Jesus Christ; likewise by David, in Psal. 145.8,9. *The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy, the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;* Yea, Christ himself witnesseth to this truth, in Job. 3.16,17. and by his Apostles, Rom. 5.18. 2 Cor. 5.14,15. 1 Tim. 2.1,3,4,5,6 7. Tit. 2.11. Heb. 2.9. 2 Pet. 3.9. And the Angel of the Lord also, Luke 2.10.11. &c. And for the latter, which is the baptizing such in the name of Jesus Christ, who confesseth faith in him, it is so highly promoted by Christ, and his Apostles, that there is neither

precept nor president for the sprinkling or washing of Infants in his name.

But that some who have been professors of the Truth, have with-drawn themselves from the same, it is evident, and proved Traytors thereunto, as did *Judas* for the love of mony, and as *Demas*, to imbrace this present world; yea, some have been so farre corrupted with covetous practises in these our days, that they have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of *Balaam* the son of *Boser*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, for some have with-drawn themselves from the truth, that they might bee partakers with you in your Tythes and Offerings; and some also have been led away by the temptations of *Satan*; and good is the Word of the Lord which hath said, *Act 20. 30.* that of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

But it may be as truly said, that Jesus is not the Christ, because one of his Ministers left him, and betrayed him, as it can be said, that this is not the way of Christ, because some turn from it, and prove traytors thereunto.

Neither is the division which you talk of amongst the tervants of Christ, about some of the things of Christ, any safe argument to conclude that therefore they are not the servants of Christ, for such things have fali out amongst those that have been called Saints, and precious in the sight of God, in that some have been, and are weak, and some are strong, and so as there are degrees of knowledge amongst the Saints, it doth occasion some difference, as it hath formerly done; do we not finde that even two of the Apostles, to wit, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Act 15. 39.* (men that truly feared God) were at some difference, when the men of *Ephesus* that were Idolaters, can cry all with one voyce, *Act. 19. 34.* Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

And whereas you say, That they have left their Conventicles to be guld, and deluded by the dreggs of men, &c.

I must tell you, that those dreggs of men as you are pleased disdainfully, and in scorn to call them, will prove to be those *1 Cor. 1, 27, 28.* foolish things of the world which God hath chosen to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, which God hath chosen to confound those that boast so much of their own wisdome, and learning, which hath been bought for mony.

But it seemeth that this man, by his writing, hath not been much acquainted with that which is held by those which he is pleased to call fanatick spirirs, and therefore that which he at the first sight hastily judgeth to be error, may upon better trial prove to be truth, which useth to be unsavoury to those that delight in worldly gain. *Act 16. 19.* and are exercised in a Craft by which they have their wealth, *Act 19. 25.* therefore I do not much wonder that

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my Positions are unsavoury to Parson Rawson, and so having examined those Arguments which are brought against them, with much boasting of being unanswerable, I shall endeavour by the assistance of the most high God, to answer to his Arguments in order as they are stated.

The first of the Positions is by this man granted to be a truth, viz.

Posit. 1. *That the most holy and high God did from all eternity, by one sole and single act, see all whatsoever he purposed to do, or permit to be done by any of the Creatures.*

But to the second Position, viz.

Posit. 2. *That God saw some persons embracing the means of Salvation, and those he elected in Christ from the foundation of the world to everlasting life, &c.*

This is so farre from soundness, you say, that it is flat Pelagianisme; an old Heresie exploded out of the Church for many ages since; by which you say, that it must be concluded, that the eternal Decree of Gods unchangeable election, must be dependent on the intervention of mans liberty of willing, and working, &c.

Answ. What it was that Pelagius the Monk held; you may see in the Ecclesiastical Chronography of Eusebius Pamphilus, pag. 595; also it makes no matter to me in these things, it is possible hee might hold a truth as well as Calvin; but the Fathers of whom we have learned these things, are those that have not erred in their Doctrin, which are those before mentioned, to wit, Jesus Christ himself, the holy Prophets and Apostles; but that the Scripture when it speaketh of Election, makes it to be altogether independent on the Creature, so as that nothing acted or done by the Creature is to be accounted of as a motive, incentive, meritorious, or procuring ground or cause (as this man doth endeavour to cast upon me) I freely grant to be a truth according to the Scriptures by him brought in, Epb. 1.5. 11. neither is there any thing in this Position tending to the exaltation of the Creature, so as to make any thing that is acted, or done by the Creature, to bee any motive, or incentive cause for which God elects, as a meritorious or procuring ground or cause of it, for to say that God saw some men imbracing the means of Salvation, and those he elected in Christ from the foundation of the world, through Sanctification of the Spirit, &c. to eternal life, as the Position speaketh, is not to say, for imbracing the means of Salvation, or that the imbracing the means of Salvation, is a meritorious or procuring ground or cause of our election, any more than the words of the holy Sp tit spoken by David, Ps. 4. 3. but know, that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, should be a meritorious or procuring ground, or cause of the godly mans being set apart, or chosen to the Lord, neither is there any more ground or cause to call the words of this Position flat Pelagianisme, or an old Heresie, than there

there is to call the words of David so, for if him that is godly ( or Beleevers ) or those that imbbrace the means of Salvation ) be not those that God hath Elected in Christ to eternal life, then shew me by plain Scripture proof ( if you can ) who they be, and what be their names that we may know them ; and if these Scriptures, to wit, *Psal. 37.* from *vers. 9.* to *vers. 21.* *Prov. 3. 33,* *34. 35.* and *Mark 16. 16.* together with many other of the sayings of the holy Spirit in the Scripture, that have the like sound, be not for substance a true copy of Gods Decree of Election and Reprobation from the foundation of the world, then shew us a true copy of it, if you can.

The first Argument that is brought against this Posicion in form is this.

*Arg. 1. If the rise of our Election be founded in the meer mercy and free grace of God, then it is not upon Gods fore-sight of mans imbracing the means of Salvation.*

*But it is founded in the meer mercy and free grace of God, therefore not upon the fore-sight of the imbracing the means.*

*Answ.* The first Proposition or Major he saith is unquestionable, and that is all the proof that we have from him for it, saying, there is but one cause to produce that effect ; the Minor he bringeth Scripture for, the proof of the truth of which I do not question ; the Scriptures are, *Dent. 7. 7, 8. and 10. 15.* *Matth. 20. 15.* *Luke 12. 32.* *Rom. 9. 11. 18. 21.* *Ephes. 1. 5. 11.* *2 Tim. 1. 9.* but notwithstanding he setteth such a strong guard upon his Major, saying it is unquestionable, yet I must needs question the mans meaning in the sequel, or consequence of it, which is in these words, *Then it is not upon Gods fore-sight of mans imbracing the means of Salvation,* now if his meaning be, that God doth not at all respect the imbracing the means of Salvation, then it is by me denied ; for although mans believing, and obeying the Gospel, or imbracing the means of Salvation be not to be accounted of as a motive, incentive, or a procuring ground or cause for which God Elects men and women to eternal life, yet it hath been the good will and pleasure of our God, through his loving kindness, and freeness of his Grace, even when hee was at liberty, and might have left mankind in that lost and perishing condition that mans sin had brought him into, and have been just in so doing, but I say, it hath been his pleasure when he was at liberty, to engage himself by purpose and decree, to elect, justify, and save all those men and women that did, or should in time imbrace that means of Salvation which from before the foundation of the world, he did intend to tender unto fallen Mankind by his Son Jesus Christ, and did not look at any thing that was in the Creature, or should be acted by the Creature, as any motive by which he was drawn thereunto ; but the moving cause was that fountain of everlasting love that was in himself towards his poor perishing Creature, freely to enter into an engagement by purpose and

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God decree, and from that purpose & decree, to make forth promises in the Scripture, that are, *3 Cor. 1. 20.* yea, and amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us, that all that sort or kind of people that do imbrace the means of Salvation, to wit, the free tenders of Christ in the Gospel, and continue in the faith and way of Jesus with a single heart, and upright minde to the end of their lives, *Mat. 24. 13.* shal undoubtedly be saved, & God can as soon cease to be, as that he should fail in making good those promises to that sort or kind of people aforesaid, because they flow from his purpose and decree, which is unchangeable like unto himself, as I shall by the assistance of God hereafter make appear in this following discourse.

But if by these words, then it is not upon Gods fore-sight of mans ambracing the means, but only that the imbracing of the means is not a motive, or moving cause for which God elects, then his Argument is true in every part of it; but I have some cause to except against the sequel of this major Proposition, viz. then it is not upon Gods fore-sight of mans imbracing the means; not so much in respect of any untruth that I finde in it, if his meaning be as aforesaid, but the exception that I make against it, is in respect of the terms of it, because it varieh from the Position, not answering the expressions of it; for the Position doth not say that God elected men upon the fore-sight of their imbracing the means, but the substance that is in it, is, That God saw some men imbracing the means, those he elected, &c. and therefore if it had answered to it, it should have spoke thus: Then God hath not elected those men which he saw imbracing the means of Salvation, and then it had been so palpably false, that it must needs have been denied without any further trouble, but as it is it may be a truth, and yet proves nothing in the Position to be false.

And also it is to be minded, that the people spoken of in those Scriptures by him quoted out of *Dent. 7. 7, 8.* and *10. 15.* are said in the sixth verse of the seventh chapter, to be a holy people unto the Lord their God, and those people which are said at that time to be a holy people, and chosen to be a special people unto the Lord their God, above all the people that were upon the face of the earth; afterwards, for their murmuring against God, and tempting of him ten times, and not hearkening to his voyce, were destroyed in the Wilderness, and their Carcasses fell in the Wilderness through their unbelief; and doubtless saith God, yee shall not come into the Land concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, *Numb. 14. 29, 30.* and thus they come to know his breach of promise, ver. 34. See also *Hebrews 3. 16, 17, 18, 19.*

His second Argument is this.

Arg. 2. If the Patriarch Jacob was elected meerly out of Grace, without any respect had to any of his faith, works, or use of means, then all others are

are likewise so elected, for there is the one alike motive for the election of all as of one.

But Jacob was elected merely out of the good will of God, without any respect had to faith, works, or use of means, at least for the moving of God to elect him. Therefore all others are so elected.

*Answ.* First, I cannot but minde those words that fall from his Pen in the close of his Argument, at least saith he, for the moving of God to elect him; certainly either it was his minde to give out something, as though the Position had said that mens faith, works, and use of means did move God to elect them, when the word works was not there at all, for had it been in it, without an explanation of it, I should not have vindicated the Position, but as it is I must maintain the truth of it against all opposers whatsoever; neither is there any thing in it as that faith, or use of means doth move God to the electing of any men, or else surely his heart smote him, or his own Conscience did accuse him, that he had excluded the use of means wholly in the electing of men to life and salvation, as if God had no respect to it upon any account whatsoever, and yet should take pay for preaching, as if it were a thing of great worth upon that account.

Secondly, I say, that the Patriarch Jacob, and all others that are elect, are elected merely of Grace, without any respect had to their works, if it bee meant merely the works of the Law, but that Jacob, or any other man or woman whatsoever is elected, without any respect had to faith, or use of means, I do deny, for the Scripture in *Rom. 9. 11.* which is, that which he bringeth to prove his Argument, prooweth no such thing, but the contrary, for although it was said to *Rebecca* before the Children were yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, yet there is nothing at all about excluding faith, or use of means, for the Apostles drift in that very Text is, to exclude the works of the Law that the Jews would dwell upon for Justification, that so he might set up faith in the roome and place thereof, which I shall have occasion to speak of hereafter; in the mean while, consider, that *Paul* is so farre from confusion, in putting faith, works, and use of means altogether, and shutting them all out of doors together, as having no place at all in that great and weighty work of our election to eternal life, as this *Babylonian* doth, that on the contrary, he in beating down the works of the Law, and casting it out from having any place at all in that thing, viz. the Election, or Justification of persons in the sight of God to eternal life, doth in that ninth of the *Romans*, together with many other sayings by him recorded in that Epistles and other of the Epistles that he hath written to the Churches of the Saints, endeavour to set up faith, and the use of means that is leading thereunto in the same thing;

yea-

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yea, even in that very 9. of the Romans sheweth clearly, and plainly in the conclusion of all, what he saith in the former part of the Chapter, setting down these very words in the 30, 31, 32. verses. *What shall wee say then, that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith, but Israel which followed after the Law of righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of righteousness; wherefore because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the Law, for they stumbled at that stumbling stone.*

And in Chap. 3. where he wholly excludeth the deeds of the Law in that busyness of Justification, saying vers. 20. *Therefore by the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin,* but sheweth that faith is for another end and use, in the following verses; and then in making inquiry in the 27. vers. *Where is boasting then?* it is saith Paul, excluded; by what Law? of works; nay, but by the Law of faith: in which words of the Apostle it is clear, that faith, and the deeds of the Law, are different, and the Law of works, and the Law of faith for different ends, and as he concludeth in vers. 20. *That by the deeds of the Law, there should no flesh be justified in the sight of God.* So in vers. 28. hee maketh that a sure ground by which hee certainly concludeth, *That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.* And so also in Chap. 4. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is accounted to him for righteousness; and so preferring faith, or shewing that as faith was counted to Abraham for righteousness, so faith is counted to all that believeth for righteousness, and the promise that hee should bee the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. Vers. 13. *For if they which are of the Law bee heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect,* vers. 14. *because the Law worketh wrath, for where no law is, there is no transgression,* vers. 15. and then concludeth again in vers. 16. that in regard, that to be justified in the sight of God, or to be the heire of the world, was not through the Law, nor of the Law, nor by the deeds of the Law, Therefore, saith he, *it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might bee sure to all the seed.* See also Chap. 5. 1, 2. So that wee may see, that although election to life and salvation, and to be justified in the sight of God, be not of the Law, nor through the Law, nor by the deeds of the Law, nor yet for faith, and yet it is by faith, and through faith, and in believeng, and no where said to be without it, by which it doth appear that the putting of faith and works, and the use of means altogether, and to say that God had no more respect to faith, and the use of the means of salvation than hee had to the works of the Law, in electing, and justifying persons in his sight unto eternal life, is a mistake at least, if

if it amount not to an error; for if God respect not faith, nor use of means, in the electing of men and women to life and salvation, then shew us by plain Scripture proof, if you can, what it is that he respects, for wee have learned already that he respecteth not persons, *Act. 10. 34. Rom. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Col. 3. 24.*

His third Argument is this,

*Argu. 3. If the decree of Election be absolute, without any respect had to faith, works, or use of means, then God did not elect upon the fore-sight of the embracing of the means.*

*But the decree of Election is absolute, &c. Therefore, see for proof, Rom. 9. 11. & Rom. 11. 5, 6, 7. Eph. 1. 4. to 11. Mat. 20. 16. and 22. 14.*

*Answ.* To which I answer, That the Decree of Election is absolute, without any respect had to the works of the Law; for we shall ground upon Pauls conclusion, *Rom. 3. 28.* *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;* For he that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, and continuall in that faith, shall absolutely be saved; and hee that is absolutely justified and saved, must needs be absolutely elected; for that sort or kinde of people that are called and accounted believers in his Son, and endure to the end, or remain faithful unto death, shall absolutely be saved; *Mat. 24. 13.* and have the *Crown of life,* *Rev. 2. 10.* For as I have before shewed the promises flow from the Decree of Election, which is absolute; *Hoc. God himself, that cannot change,* and all that sort of people before spoken of, are concerned in it, and not one of them shall ever bee excluded from it; but it is not of persons simply considered, as persons distinct from those qualifications before spoken of, as hath been already sufficiently proved, neither doth the Scriptures by him brought, prove any such thing, for although the Scriptures do exclude the works of the Law wholly in that thing, as hath been already granted, yet they afford us not one word to prove that faith, and the use of the means of salvation should be cast out with it, for hee may as well say, *That because Ishmael was cast out of Abrahams house or family, therefore Isaac must be cast out also,* as to say, that because the works of the Law, or deeds of the Law, in the busyness of Election, Justification, and Salvation of the sons of men is cast out, therefore must faith, the use of the means of Salvation, bee cast out also.

His fourth Argument is this,

*Argu. 4. If faith and works be the fruits and effects of Election, then they are no wayes causes of it, for which God should elect.*

*But they are fruits and effects, Act. 13. 48.*

*Answ.* First, See here what ado the man maketh with works and causes, as the Position never mentioneth.

Secondly, I demand what ground he hath to say? that faith and works bee

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the fruits and effects of election, except it be this; That because election goeth before, and faith and works follow after, and by that way of reasoning he may as well say, that *Abel's* death was the effect of *Cain's* birth, and that may be accounted the cause of it; but yet *Cain*, being born had not effected it, if he had not afterwards rose up against him and slew him, and so he came to his death, it being effected by that means, so likewise notwithstanding the Decree of Election was before man had any being, yet *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, Rom. 10. 17. as a means appointed by God for the effecting of it, that so men might fall under the decree of Salvation, that is appointed by God to be the portion of believers, from before the foundation of the world.

To his Greek that he writeth in the margin of his paper, from Act. 13. 48. *As many as were ordained, etc.* I do desire him to look once more into his Greek Testament, and turn to Cor. 16. 15. and then let him, as he will be willing, to answer before the Judge of the world, the Lord Jesus at his appearing, when he shall come in his glory, and let him speak according to his Conscience upon that account, whether he cannot read the same word in the Greek from which the world Ordained is translated, to be the same with that in Cor. 16. 15. from which the word Addicted is translated, and also I shall repeat to the Consciences of reasonable people, whether it be not a suitable, and agreeable kind of reading, it being directly contrary to what the Jews did, ver. 45. they spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting, and blaspheming, and so it will sound forth good sense that the Gentiles were addicted to eternal life, and believed.

This sixth Argument is this. *If in their seen faith, works, or embracing the means of Salvation, the cause of our Election, they should be likewise the cause of our Redemption, and Justification; but the latter is false, therefore the former.* The major in fact is proved by that undeniable Axiome, *Quicquid est causa, est et causa effectus.* That which is the cause of the cause, is the cause also of the thing caused, or of the effect. The Minor is proved, 2 Tim. 1. 9. Ephes. 2. 8. Rom. 3. 14. justified freely by grace.

Answ. I answer, that this Argument may tend to the confutation of them that hold fore-seen faith, works, or the embracing of the means to be the causes of their election, but it hits not us, for we hold no such thing, neither is any such thing asserted in this Position.

### The sixth Argument.

Arg. 6. *If our Election were dependent on mans embracing the means, then these absurdities would follow.* 1. The Will of God should be moved and determined by an external cause, i. e. the first should bee ordered and guided.

guided by the second, and thereby be made the second cause, which is against the rules of Philosophy, and Divinity. 2. God hereby is supposed to be capable of passion, i. e. when thus moved, but God is altogether immutable, and impassible. 3. There should be somewhat in the Creature out of God, before, greater, and better than God, because that every cause is before, and better than the effect. 4. If there might be imagined to be any thing in the Creature which might move God to the doing, or appointing of this, or that, then it would follow; that the actings, and issues of things have not a dependence upon the Decree of God, contrary to Lament. 3. 37. 5. Then man might have just cause of boasting in himself. 6. What then would become of children dying in infancy, before they had the use of faith, or works, or any imbracing of the means, and which never were to have a being to act. Therefore,

*Answe.* If our Election were so dependent on mans imbracing of the means, as that there might be imagined to be any thing in the Creature which might move God to the Decreeing, or appointing of men and women to eternal life, then I deny not but many absurdities would follow; and this Argument may do something where it hits, but as it happeneth, it hits not us, for we hold no such thing, neither is there any such thing asserted in this Position, as that our Election is dependent on mans imbracing the means, nor as that God should be thereby moved to elect.

But any rational man, that shall read these Arguments with a single eye, and with an honest and upright heart, and with a single minde, compare them with the Position they are brought to answer, cannot certainly but judge that either the man did not well minde what was in the Position, or else had forgotten what was in it when he writ his Arguments; or otherwise it must bee his folly, for all the expressions that he seemeth to quarrel at, bee of his own making, for not one of these expressions be found in the Position, as that any thing wrought in, or by the Creature is any motive, or incentive, for which God elects as a meritorious; or procuring ground or cause of it, but the whole substance of it is, that God saw some men imbracing the means of Salvation, and those he elected in Christ, &c.

But if he do, or shall at any time say in plain words that which he seemeth to intimate in his Arguments that we hold, that our faith, works, or imbracing of the means, is a motive, incentive, or procuring ground, or cause for which God elects, or that there is any such thing held forth in this Position, that God elects men in Christ for these things, then let him receive the words of Solomon for an answer, in Prov. 10. 18. *He that bideth harred with lying lips, and he that uttereth slander is a fool;* for we know, and are sure

that the Lord hath set apart or chosen to himself; *Psal. 4. 3.* a godly man; which Godly man is every one that hearkeneth to the Counsel of God given forth by Jesus Christ, and imbrace the means of Salvation, even the free tenders of Christ in the Gospel, for I dare boldly affirm, that the Lord Christ spake the minde of the Father, even that which was the purpose and decree of God, when he said, *Joh. 3. 15, 16.* that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;* and so every one that believeth in the King of righteousness, may in the Laws of the same King read, or finde their title good to the everlasting inheritance, and thus, *I Joh. 5. 10.* *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;* God giving the Holy Spirit to those that obey him, *Act. 5. 32.* to wit, Jesus Christ, and as many as are led by that Spirit of God up in obedience to the Son of God, Christ Jesus, are the Sons of God, *Rom. 8. 14.* and all this is made known unto us that are believers in Christ, that we might know, who, or what sort, or kind of people they are, that God did freely set his Love upon, and in his purpose and decree, even when hee might have left us as lost Creatures chose us unto himself, not for these things, or for any thing that he saw in us, or acted by us in the least, as any motive, incentive, or procuring ground, or cause of our Election, but the purpose, decree, and promise came freely from himself, even to decree himself to be the God and Father of such a sort, of kind of people as aforesaid in Jesus Christ, and so absolute and irrevocable is this decree of Gods unchangeable election, that even the worst of men in their natural condition, or any men or women in the world, which do consider how great things God hath done for them as they are sinners, and lost Creatures by reason thereof, and return unto their Maker in imbracing the means of Salvation, in being changed from their evil course of life, departing from sin, and leaving the vanities of this world, and believeth in Jesus with an upright heart, and with a willing minde, they coming to be so changed as aforesaid, fall into that decree of God that changeth not, and so that which was in the purpose and decree of God before time, actually cometh to be put in execution in time, and so all the Promises of God in Christ unavoidably come to be the portion of such a changed people, which are *Act. 26. 18.* *turned from darkness to light, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

But although our imbracing the means of Salvation, and believeth in Jesus, and obeying his voyce, bee no meritorious or procuring ground, or cause why God made such a decree, but that which was the moving cause thereof, was his love, as hath been already granted; yet the imbracing the means, or believeth in Jesus, and obeying his voyce, is of necessity to be done by those that have the Gospel preached unto them, as an instrumental cause by which

the purpose and decree of God in order to their everlasting good, cometh to be put in execution, as a way and meane appointed of God for that end, and one would think that this man were a little of my minde in this, by what falleth from him in the cloſe of his ſecond Argument, uſing these words, *at leaſt for the moving of God to elect*; now if hee do not hold that it is ſome cauſe by which men come to be more peculiarily interested into the favour of God by beleeving, than they are without beleeving, why did he not rather ſay, it muſt not be accounted any cauſe at all upon any account whatſoever; but it is that which the Lord Christ hath ſaid in John 16. 27. which perſwadeth me to be of that minde, in that hee hath ſaid, *The father himſelf loveth you, BECAUſE you have loved me, and have beleeved that I came ouſt from God;* and therefore if I ſhould ſay, that loving of Jesus Christ, and beleeving in him were no cauſe at all, by which we come to be chosen into the Fathers love, I ſhould ſin againſt Christ, in ſpeaking contrary to his Word; but this is more than was in the Poſition, and yet it is no more then the truthe, and ſo I ſhall come to ſee what hee ſaith to the third Poſition, which is as followeth.

Poſit. 3. God ſaw ſome men rejecting the means, to wit, the free tenders of Christ in the Gofpel, continuing in ſin and unbelief, denying the power of godlineſſ, thofe he reprobated to everlasting deſtruction, but the foreſight of God did not, nor doth not neceſſitate the thing ſeen.

This, ſaith he, hath the like unsoundneſſ in it as the former of election, there being (as he ſaith) no other ground or reason assigned for it, either of ſin or unbelief, or the rejecting of the means, but the meer good pleasure of Gods moft holy and righteous will, who will do with his Creature what he will do, neither can any expoſtulate, why haſt thou done thus? Isa. 45. 9. and yet notwithstanding he ſaith, that there can be no other ground or reason for Reprobation, but the meer good pleasure of Gods moft holy will; yet hee ſaith alſo, It is true, that ſin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means, are juſt cauſes why God decrees ſuch persons to Hell, and eternal torments, but yet not the cauſes of their Reprobation; that he ſaith, is ſolely and ſingly in the good pleasure of his will; and for proof he quoteſt, Ephes. 1. 5. which Scripture ſaith nothing at all of Reprobation, or mans deſtruction, but of the predeſtinating, or appointing of Beleevers to the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ; neither is that in Isa. 45. at all to the purpose, for it ſpeaketh not at all of Reprobation, or mans eternal deſtruction, but of Gods calling and raifing up of Cyrus to ſubdue Nations before him, and that hee would direct all his ways that he ſhould build his City, and let go his Captives; and it was his will ſo to do, and therefore woe be unto him that ſhould ſtrive with his Maker, to go about to hinder, or frustrate the design of God in that thing,

As doth appear from vers. 2, to vers. 13, and how this which hee hath here set down will agree together, I shall leave to reasonable men to judge, viz. That there is no other ground, or reason assigned for Reprobation, either of sin, unbelief, or the rejecting of the means, but the mere good pleasure of Gods most holy will; and yet say, It is true, that sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means are just causes, why God decrees such persons to hell, and eternal torments.

But hee proceedeth for the proof of what hee hath affirmed, by these following Arguments.

*Argu. 1. That which the Holy Ghost in Scripture ascribes to the sole will and good pleasure of God, that we are not to assigne other causes to.*

*But the Scripture assigns Reprobation solely to Gods will. Therefore, His major Proposition he bringeth nothing at all to prove: For proof of his minor, he alleadgeth these Texts, Rom. 9. 18, 20, 21, 22. Mat. 11. 25, Mat. 20. 15, 16. Prov. 16. 4. Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13, 17.*

*Answ.* To which I answer, The Scriptures which hee quoteth, and all that hee can finde in all the Book of God, cannot prove his Argument, for it is false in the minor Proposition, and therefore the Scripture cannot prove it, for Job. 2. 21. *No lye is of the truth,* although the Scripture doth speak of the will of God, as a cause concerned in mans Reprobation, in having his eyes blinded, and his heart hardened, and the like, yet the Scripture doth not alligne it solely and singly to the will of God, without assigning it to any other cause, but on the contrary, it doth assign the continuance in sin, and unbelief, and the rejecting the means of salvation, as a cause thereof.

But whereas he saith, *That sin, and unbelief, and the rejecting the means, are just causes why God decrees such persons to hell, and eternal torments, but not the causes of their Reprobation.* I do understand that the Decree of God which was before time, resteth for the ground thereof, more peculiarly in the will of God, without assigning other causes to it than Reprobation it self; which is the execution of the same purpose and decree of God in time, when and where the continuance in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means of salvation is found in men: For I dare affirm, that notwithstanding any decree that God had made before time, there should none bee Reprobated in time, if they did not continue in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means of salvation untill the day of Grace were at an end, which God is pleased to give unto them, accompanying them with means in the same day of Grace in order to their everlasting good. But I shall forbear to proceed any farther in this place by way of proof, because it will fall in to bee spoken to more at large in answer to his following Arguments, in which I shall have occasion to shew the plain sense of those Scriptures in Rom. 9, and others, that have the same found with

with them which are ministered up for the proof of every Argument, in which I shall by the help of the most High God, make it appear, That Gods act of Reprobation in time, in hardening the hearts of men, giving unto them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, breaking them off from their own Olive tree, hiding the things which did belong unto their peace from their eyes, that they could not attain unto the Law of righteousness, giving them up to their own hearts lust, and to uncleanness, and vile affections, and to a reprobate minde; and the like cometh not upon men meekly, solely, singly, and alone by the will of God, as the only and alone cause without assigning any other thing, as a cause thereof, but that these things come upon men as the just and righteous judgement of God upon them for their continuance in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means as aforesaid; And so I come to his second Argument, which is this,

Argu. 2. That which is the effect and consequence of Reprobation, cannot be the cause of it. But sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means, is the effect and consequence of Reprobation. Therefore,

The major, saith he, is as clear as the Sun.

The minor, he saith, is proved by these Texts, *Matth. 11. 25, 26. John 6. 36, 37. Job. 8. 36, 37. Job. 10. 26. Job. 12. 39, 40. Rom. 9. 18, 33. Rom. 11. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 8.*

*Answ.* To which I answer, First, by distinguishing upon his major Proposition, and to inquire into his meaning therein: Now if hee mean by Reprobation the Decree of God before time, distinct from Reprobation in time, or *Rom. 11. 28.* Gods giving them over to a reprobate minde, which is the execution of the Decree, then I deny, that sin and unbelief is the effect of it; for God is so far from decreeing and appointing men to commit sin, or that sin is an effect that cometh to pass by his decree and appointment, that hee doth not so much as tempt any man to sin, as wee may see *Jam. 1. 13.* Yea the Apostle James is so far from laying sin upon Gods Decree, as if that should be the cause that should produce such an effect as sin and unbelief; that he saith, ver. 14. *That every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and inticed:* And then ver. 15. hee saith, *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death:* By which wee may see that the Apostle doth not make Gods Decree to bee the cause of sin, but that indeed which is the cause which bringeth it forth is even lust. But

Secondly, If by Reprobation he meaneth the act or execution of Gods Decree in time, which is Gods giving up of people to their own hearts lust, and to a reprobate minde, as aforesaid, then also we shall finde that Gods act in the first place, is not the cause of mans sin, but mans disobeditio[n] in the first place,

is the cause why God doth execute the same as his just and righteous judgment upon them for their continuance in sins &c. as it is expressed in this Position, as appears, Psal. &c. 13, 12. Rom. 1, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28. and yet I do not deny, but sin and unbelief may be the effect and consequence of Reprobation in this sense, as mens delaying, and not coming in while the door is open, is the cause of the doors being shut against them, and then the doors being shut against them, is the cause of their abiding still without, Wherefore strive to enter in at strait gate, before the good man of the house has risen up, and hath shut to the door, Luke 13, 24, 25. While it is called to day, lest any of you bee hardened through the deceitfulness of sinnes, Heb. 3, 13.

But I do partly believe that his meaning by Reprobation in his Argument, is, that which is generally held amongst them, That Gods Will and Decree, before any thing was brought forth in order, or before man had any being, is the only and alone cause of Reprobation, and so consequently of sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means of salvation, and that no other fruits at any time can bee brought forth by them, notwithstanding all that they can do, but that these things must unavoidably follow, they being bound up thereunto by the Decree of God, and that which doth make me inclinable to beleieve, that his meaning is so, is, because I finde his Arguments tend much to the maintaining of such a thing.

But as I tender the honour and glory of God, in the exaltation of his Psal. 34, 5, 8, 9. tender mercies over all his works, and the purity of that truth, and sincerity that is in himself, togerher with his faithfulness in his upright and sincere dealings towards the sons of men; and also when I think upon the excellency of his Wisdom, I cannot but stand up in detestation of such a Doctrine which striketh at the very being of these Attributes in God. As

First, If God hath by an absolute Decree brought forth such an effect, as a continuance in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting the means of salvation, so as that the greatest part of men must be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, for doing nothing but what they must doe by the Decree of God, and cannot do otherwise; Then where is the tender mercy of our God which is over all his works?

Secondly, If God hath brought forth such an effect as a continuance in sin, and unbelief, by his Decree before man had any being, so as that the greatest part of men must be eternally damned for doing but what they must do, and cannot, neither ever could do otherwise; Then where is the God of truth, who hath said, Ezek. 18, 23. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should dye, and not have he found out from his wages, and live? Now if this man should

should undertake to resolve this question, and be true to his own Principles, he must say, there can be no other reason assigned for it, either of sin, or unbelief, and the rejecting of the means, but merely the good will and pleasure of God: but God himself, whose Word I shall believe before this mans Arguments, hath said, *Ezck. 18. 32.* *I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth;* and if this be not sufficient, yet least men should distrust him, he further confirmeth it in *Ezck. 33. 11.* *Say unto them, as I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

But now, if God have so disposed of those that live and dye in sin and unbelief, as that they never could do otherwise, because of that decree of God which was before they had any being, then I say, what truth were in all those shews of love that come from God, in saying, *as he liveth, he delighteth not in the death of the wicked, &c.* were it not dissembling, false dealing, and hypocrisy, as bad as can be found in the worst of men? but I have better thoughts of God, and so I trust hath every sincere Soul that truly feareth God, *Rom. 3. 4.* yea, *Let God be true, and every man a liar, as it is written; that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*

Again thirdly, If Gods Decree of Reprobation before man had any being, doth produce, or bring forth such an effect or consequence, as a continuance in sin and unbelief, &c. so as that men cannot, neither ever could repent, and believe the Gospel to the saving of their souls, nor do that which God hath required to be done, in order to the obtaining forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life, then where is the Wisdom of God? is it not below the wisdom that is in the men of this world, which do not gather *Grapes of thorns, nor Figs of thistles?* they do not wait in expectation of grapes, where they plant nothing but brambles, neither do they look for a harvest of Wheat, in that field in the which they sow nothing but Tares; for if they should so do, and also complain against the Brambles because they brought not forth Grapes, and against the Field because it brought not forth Wheat, would it not be folly in them? judge yee, that have understanding.

But God that excelleth in Wisdom doth not so, read and consider, *Isa. 5. 1, 2, 3; 4, 5, 6, 7.* and see what the Lord himself saith, vers. 4. *What could have been done more to my Vine-yard that I have not done in it? wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes.* See also vers. 7. *And he looked for judgement, but behold oppression; for righteously, but behold a cry.* See also *Jer. 2. 21.* *Yet I had planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed, how then art thou turned*

introduction of new plants of a foreign origin? Vol. 10, p. 136.

Obj. But it may be objected, That God knew that such effects would follow notwithstanding, and therefore he could not wait in expectation of better things? would suggest that I know something about God's ways.

in their day of Grace; see the words of Christ, Luke 19.42. saying, *If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes*: Also read and consider well, for the better clearing of this truth, Psal. 81.11. to the end; Luke 13. 34, 39, Rom. 1.24. to the end, and minde well the 266 verſe. For this CAUSE God also gave them up to vile affections; And also verſ. 28. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a Reprobate minde.* And in this ſense, I do not deny, but that ſin and unbelief may be an effect and conſequence of Reprobation, but this Reprobation, or being given over of God to a reprobate minde, is not ſolely and ſingly to be assigned, or ascribed to the will or decree of God, from before the foundation of the world, without any other ground or cause, being assigned alioꝝ unto by the holy Spirit in the Scripture, for there wee may ſee that mans defauit in not improving what he hath received; or may obtain, if hee bee not wanting to himſelf, in good earnest, to ſeek that grace of life that God doth freely tender to the ſons of men by Jesus Christ in the Gofpel, & an obſeſtion Object. But this tendeth to the exaltation of the creature.

*Anſw.* That indeed is that false report that is cast upon us in these dayes, and upon the truth that we profet's, that I know not what ground they have for it, except it be this, because we ſometime ſe the word SELF in our ſpeaking or writing; but upon that account they may as well ſay, that Peter was a Free-willer, or one that exalted the creature, becauſe he ſaid, Mat. 3.40. *Save your ſelves from this unoward generation,* and also they may as well charge the ſame upon Paul, because he ſaid, 1 Tim. 4.16. *Take heed unto thy SELF, unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in ſo doing, thou ſhalt both ſave thySELF and them that hear thee.* But wee are ſo far from ſetting up any wiſdom, strength, or power of our own, that wee do acknowledge that wee 1 Cor. 4.7. *have nothing that wee have not received,* neither do wee glory, as if we had not received it, For Job. 1.16. *of his fulness have wee all received,* and grace for grace; or grace to obtain grace; yea ſo far are wee from maintaining that wee execute any power of our own in repenting and believeng in the name of Jesus; that wee do hold and believē that wee have no power at all to do either good or evil, but what we do enjoy through the mercy of God by our Redeemer, Who is that Col. 1.17. 1 Cor. 8.6. one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, Act. 17.28. For in him wee live, and move, and have our being: And ſo wicked men dishonour God, not with any thing they have of their own, but with thoſe members of the body, and faculties of the minde, which are in themſelves good, as they do enjoy them from God through Jesus Christ, but are abuſed by being exerciſed in the ſpeaking of words, and doing of actions that are contrary to the

minde of God. See James 3.9,10. speaking of the tongue, and saying, *Thereo  
with blesse wee God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are  
made after the similitude of God, out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing  
and cursing; My brethren these things ought not so to bee.* Now those that  
wee read ut in Scripture that said, *With our tongues we will prevail, our lips  
are our OWN, who is Lord over us?* were wicked men, and proud boasters, but  
we have learned not to glory in these things ; but in this we delight to glory,  
*That we know Jesus Christ to be the Lord, which exerciseth loving kind-  
ness, judgement, and truth in the earth.*

And to those Scriptures in Rom.9. which seem to be the ground-work, or foundation upon which these Arguments are built, they hold forth no such thing, as this man doth endeavour to draw from them, or wrest out of them, by which he would have his Arguments seem to bee currant gold, but will bee found to bee but dross, for they speak forth no such thing, as that God doth elect men in Jesus Christ to eternal life without any respect had to faith, or the use of means; although they do exclude the works of the Law wholly in that thing, as hath been already shewed, neither do they speak forth any such thing, as that God doth assign the Reprobation of persons to everlasting destruction solely and singly to his will, without assigning it to any other cause ; but the contrary is in it, as hath been already made to appear in ver. 32. and in Chap. 11. 20. in which it is plain, that unbelief, or the not seeking of righteousness by faith in Christ Jesus was the cause why the fleshly seeds, or natural branches were broken off from their own Olive tree, were blinded or hardened, had the spirit of slumber given unto them, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, and so were Reprobated, BECAUSE they sought not Righteousness by faith, and BECAUSE of unbelief. And thus neither Ishmael, nor Esau, nor Pharaoh were cast out of Gods presence, given over, or hardened, merely, solely and singly by the will or decree of God, without assigning any other thing in Scripture as a cause of it ; for Ishmael was persecuting the Son, that was born by promise, Gal. 4.29. Esau was a prophanē person, and for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right, Hebix 12.16 and his posterity also, which is much concerned in what God laid to Rebecca, Gen. 25.32. for the Lord did not speak to her of two persons, but said, *That two Nations  
were in her womb, and two manner of people should be separated from her  
bowels, and the one people should be stronger than the other people, &c.* And those judgements that are to befall the Edomites, or the posterity of Esau, is not assigned solely and singly to the will of God, mentioning nothing beside the will of God, as a cause of it, as appeareth in that Prophecie of Obadiah ver. 10. *FOR thy violence against thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.* And Pharaoh likewise wee do not finde

finde to be hardened, or given up of God, untill he had hardened his own heart first, if wee minde and consider well his evill dealings towards God, and his people in the first place; do but read and consider well. Exod. 8.32. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time: ALSO, which is a plain intimation that hee had hardened his heart several times before, and so God maketh vessels of dishonour not in the first creation as hath been imagined by some, for then he made all things good, Gen. 2.31. And God made man upright, but he bath sought out many inventions, Eccles. 7.29.

But it is found in Scripture that Gods way in making vessels of dishonour, is in respect of what hee doth by men in time when they come to have a being, and so it appeareth from that similitude of the Potter, Jer. 18.3,4. *Then I went down to the Potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels, and the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the Potter; so hee made it again, another vessel as seemed good to the Potter to make it:* And wee do finde that God doth not apply the parable or similitude to any work that hee did in the first Creation, or before man had a being, but he doth apply it to his dealing with men in time, when they have a being, for saith the Lord by the Prophet, vers. 5, 6. *O house of Israel (Note) the house of Israel was a people then in being, and were not at that time yet made vessels of dishonour, or given over of God to their own destruction, but, God pleadeth from that similitude that he had power, and also would do it, if they did walk stubbornly against him, which accordingly came to pass;* For saith the Lord by the Prophet, vers. 11. *Behold I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you, return yee NOW every one from his evill way, and make your wayes and your doings good, and they said there is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices,* &c. vers. 12. And more for the clearing of this, you may finde, if you read Chap. 19. and especially minde the 15. verse, the words are these. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will bring upon this City, and upon all her Towns, all the evil that I have pronounced against it,* BECAUSE they hardened their necks that they might not hear my words.

And this is that which is pleaded for in Rom. 9. that God hath power, and also it is his will to harden the hearts, and blinde the eyes, or darken the understandings of those that will not obey the truth in their day of grace, when light is held forth unto them, as it came to pass upon the Jews as the just and righteous judgement of God upon them, Luke 19.44. BECAUSE they knew not the time of their visitation Rom. 9.32. BECAUSE they sought it not by faith, and Rom. 11.20. BECAUSE of unbelief.

But there is one Text yet in the Reer of all the rest, that are mustered up for the proof of this Argument, which I cannot well passe by, without speaking

from things to it, lest it should bee said, that there was some strength in it, which I knew not how to remoye, the Text is 1 Pet. 2.8. Which stumble at the word, being disobedience, wherunto also they were appointed. To which I reply, first by demanding, who it is that can bee disobedient in doing what they are appointed to do by God himself? Now if those that live, and dye in unbelieve were appointed of God so to do, then where is their disobedience? are they not as much obedient as those that live and dye in the faith? for they do no more than what is appointed them of God to do, and then do they not equally and alike do the will of the Father, and then would they not bee the brethren and sisters of Christ, *Matt. 12. 50.* Let those that have understanding judge.

And secondly, I do therefore affirm, that the disobedience of unbelievers is in not doing of that which they should do by the appointment of God, and as sonicke of the former Translations do read, being disobedient to that wheron they were set; and if this than do but look into his Greek Testament, and say no otherwise of this Text, then in his own conscience either judgeth to bee the plain sense of it, as he is freely willing to answer the same before the great and righteous Judge the Lord Jesus at his appearing, When hee shall sit upon the Throne of his glory. Then I am perswaded that he will say no otherwise beth. And, *What is man that hee hath to reprove him? withoute knowledge to judge.*  
**Object.** But the Objection that usually is made against this is grounded upon Rom. 9. 19, 20. *Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he yet finde fault, for who hath resisted his will? & nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? &c.* Now that which some do infer from it is, That God doth impute manes eternal destruction withoute signifying, or ascribing any wherthing to be the cause of it, but the will of God, as this man doth in his circumstances.

To which I answer; That there is no need at all for men to dispute with God, so as to demand of him a ground or cause of mans Reprobation, for he hath shewed them the things of himself, by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head; so that they are without excuse: Rom. 1.20. and hath shewed sufficiently in the Scripture, that the rejecting the means of Salvation, continuing in sin and unbelief, is the cause of it, as hath been already proved; and yet I shall endeavour by the help and assistance of God to make it more plain; for consider, that the people that Paul speaketh *In those words, Thou wilt say unto me, why doeth he yet finde fault, for who hath resisted his will? &c.* were the Jews, which notwithstanding all that God did publish and declare unto them by Jesus Christ, and by his Apostles; first, rendering unto them the choyce and precious mercies of himself the in his Son Christ, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in

in his name among all nations; beginning at Jerusalem; and so it was declared unto them, Acts 4. 10, 11, 12. that there was none other name under heaven given among men whereby they must be saved, but only by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had Crucified, whom God had raised from the dead. Which is the stone that was set at nought by those builders, the Jews; yea this truth was plainly declared by Paul also, in Acts 3. 21 from vers. 16. to vers. 46. and he applying his speech to the men of Israel, and children of the stock of Abraham, in the conclusion thereof, vers. 38, 39. saith these words, Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses. Beware therefore, saith he, vers. 40, 42. lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the Prophets, Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days which ye shall see. See Hab. 1. 5. will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you; and by this it may safely be concluded, that Paul was not of that mind, that those people, or any other people whatsoever, were appointed, or designed of God by his purpose and decree from before the foundations of the world, that unavoidably they must, and can do no other but despise Jesus Christ, and the means of Salvation by him, for if he had been of that mind, then certainly he would not have bid them beware, or take heed of that which they could not help.

But notwithstanding this, vers. 45. They spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming, and although, through Jesus Christ was preached unto them the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses, yet, as they had said before, that they were Moses Disciples, Job. 9. 28, 29. and they knew that God spake by Moses, but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is; so yet they were resolved to dwell upon the Law of Moses, together with being children of the stock and seed of Abraham according to the flesh, for justification in the sight of God; and to the very same people Paul speaketh, in Rom. 2. 17, 18, 19. saying, Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the Law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law, and art CONFIDENT that thou thy self art a guide of the blinde, a light of them which are in darkness; and to those people hee speaketh also, Rom. 9. at the beginning, and so forward, saying in vers. 7, 8. Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is ( saith he ) they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God,

God, but the children of the Promise are counted for the seed; and this he proveth, in shewing that *Ishmael* the son of the bond woman, Gal. 4. 22, 23. verses, and *Esau* also that was born of *Rebecca*, which together with *Jacob* was conceived in the wombe of her, to wit, *Rebecca*, by one, even by their Father *Isaac*, all descending from *Abrabam* according to the flesh, and yet *Ishmael* and *Esau* must be cast out of *Abrabams* house or family. And that which he saith vers. 13. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,* was written by the Prophet *Malachi* many years after they were born, brought forth, and became two Nations, as it was said to *Rebecca*, Gen. 25. 23. and the ground or reason shewed by *Obadiah*, vers. 10. and this is to shew that God hath not bound himself by any purpose, decree, or promise to elect, justify, or eternally to save them by their keeping the Law of *Moses*, and in being the Seed of *Abrabam* according to the flesh, and therefore there could be no unrighteousnes with God in casting them out, or breaking them off from their own Olive Tree, notwithstanding all that they could plead for themselves in these things.

But it was that vain confidence that *Paul* knew they had in these things before mentioned in Chap. 2. Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the Law, and art CONFIDENT, &c. and therefore *Paul* might well say, *Thou Jew, that restest in the Law, and art CONFIDENT;* wilt say unto me, why doth he yet finde fault? for who hath resisted his will? for being so confident in these things, they would be apt to say, *Why should God finde fault with us?* is it not the will of God that the seed of Abraham, being circumcised, and keeping the Law of Moses, should be his people, and hath not God himself commanded these things, and annexed Promises therunto? who hath resisted his will in all this? But *Paul* having before fully proved, that God had not bound himself either by purpose, decree, or promise, to elect, justify, or eternally to save them upon that account, might well say, *Thou must not reply against God,* for he having made no such promises unto thee upon those terms, he is at liberty to break thee off as an unfruitful branch, and to make of thee a vessel of dishonour.

For notwithstanding all the means that God had used towards them in order to their conversion, they having all heard, Rom. 10. 18. and God having stretched forth his hands unto them all the day long, and yet, notwithstanding all that God had done for them in tendering unto them such precious mercies in Jesus Christ, yet they were a disobedient and gain-saying people; and thus walking stubbornly against God all the day of grace, they are now in the hands of God as the clay was in the hand of the Potter to make of them vessels of dishonour; for the Potter did not take a peece of clay into his hand on purpose to make such a vessel at the first, as it was made by him afterwards; but Jer. 18. 4. the vessel

vessel which he made of clay was marred in the hand of the Potter, and so hee made it again another vessel, as it seemed good unto the Potter to make it; And so in like manner, those people the Jews, that Paul speaketh of in the Epistle to the Romans, being stubborn in the hands of God, and disobedient unto his righteousness, even when his hand was stretched forth unto them all the day long, it was now just with God to make of them vessels of wrath, fitted, or made up for destruction; and thus it is plain to any rational man that will but look upon these things with a single eye, and with an upright minde judge of the same, that the good will and pleasure of God, is not solely and singlyly the cause of Reprobation, without having any other ground, or reason assigned thereunto in Scripture, but that the rejecting of the means of salvation, to wit, the free tenders of Christ in the Gospel, continuing in sin and unbelief, and denying the power of godliness, is assigned by the holy Spirit in the Scripture as a caule thereof.

And as God thus dealt with the Jews, because they sought not righteousness by faith in Christ; so doth God in like manner deal with all this world for the like cause; He that believeth not, is condemned already, BECAUSE he hath not believéd in the name of the onely begotten Son of God: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. And a Thess. 3.10,11,12. BECAUSE they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: And for this CAUSE God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believéd not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Now the use that wee may make of this, is first, it doth hereby appear that Gods Decree, before the foundation of the world, doth not hinder men from being eternally saved, if they bee not wanting to themselves in the use of that means, and the exercise of that power that God giveth unto them, for the accomplishing of their everlasting happiness.

Secondly, It may be a precious encouragement to all people to go unto God by Jesus Christ, in the use of that means that hee hath appointed for life, and salvation, For as much as he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Thirdly, Those that have imbraced Jesus Christ by that way and means, may bee sweetly comforted in the everlasting love of the Father, manifested to their souls, through the precious promises of God in Christ Jesus, which are not yea, and nay, but in him they are yea and amen, which promises are remission of sins, the everlasting inheritance, and the holy Spirit of promise, as Eph.1.13,14. 2 Cor.1.22. a seal or earnest of the same inheritance, and those promises are assigned, or made over so firmly to penitent believers, being

Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; together with seeking for the Holy Spirit by prayer, and laying on of hands; believing the resurrection of the dead, and the eternal judgement; and promising, upon these principles, in holiness of life, in the fear of God, and with a single heart in obedience to Jesus Christ, delighting to observe all his counsele; and so going on unto perfection in that way of righteousness, with perseverance enduring therein to the end of their lives, that they shall undoubtedly bee saved in the day of the Lord, according to these, and such-like Scriptures, Job. 3. 15, 16. Chap. 15. to. 17., Mark. 13. 14. It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones shalld perish. (Note) it hath an affusion to ver. 9. These little ones which holde in man, Mark. 16. 16. Act. 2. 38. Chap. 16. 31, 32, 33, 34. March. 24. 13. Rev. 2. 10. For God cannot fail in making good his promises to his people, they remaining faithful, For he hath confirmed it by an oath, which to men is an end of all strife, Heb. 6. 16, 17, 18. Wherefore O ye willing the more abundantly to them in the hours of pressure, the immutability of his counsels, confirmed also by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us,

Fourthly, Let the express words of Jesus Christ bee accepted of as sweet counselle to all people, John 3. 19, 20. For a little while is the light with you, walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may bee the children of the light. Also Matt. 7. 13. Enter you therefore daily while it is called day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Hearken unto these things, ye sons of men. Seek ye the Lord while he may bee found, call ye upon him while his voice is near; Let him withdrawe from his way, and the unrighteous returne his thoughts; let him returne unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.

His third Argument is this,

Arg. 3. If sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means of salvation, were the only causes why God reprobates us to destruction, then there is no such mystery in the decree of Reprobation, neither are Gods ways therein so unsearchable, but that the true and undoubted cause may bee assigned: But yet they are mysterious and unsearchable. See (saith hee) Rom. 9. 14, what shall we say then, Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid, Rom. 11. 33. 34. O the depthes of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, How unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out? For who hath knowne the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellour?

Answe. To which I answer; First, that had I not been a little acquainted with the blindness of these men, that love to be called of men, Rabbits, or Master, I should have been taken up with admiration, that one boasting so much of Schollarship, should make a parcel of Arguments directly against the truth, and yet should agree no better one with another; in his first Argument, in answere to this Position, he giveth out as if the Will of God were solely and singulerly the cause of Reprobation, and that no other cause can be assigned for it, either of sin, unbeliefs, or the rejecting of the means, but the mere good pleasure of Gods most holy and righteous will, as in the Preamble to his Argument, and in the minor Proposition of the Argumente it self, saith, the Scripture affiyns Reprobation solely to Gods will; and yet in this third Argument, he strongly calleth in question the truth of all this, so giving out as if the true and undoubted cause cannot be affiyned, or as if that which is solely and singulerly the cause of Reprobation, were not the true and undoubted cause of it; what a peice of confused Ruffe is this, for them that have understanding to judge.

2. Again, why doth he say, *If sin, and unbeliefs, and the rejecting of the means, are the only causes why God Reprobates any;* what need he pine in that expression only, since the Position doth not say expressly that it is any cause at all, but, *that God saw some with rejecting the means of salvation, &c.* and those he Reprobated; and if that sort or kinde of people that continue in sin, and unbeliefs, and reject the means of Salvation, be not those that God doth Reprove, then let him shew us by plain Scripture proof, who, or what sort of people they be, that so they may be known; but the truth of it is, that he can finde no expreſſion in the Position that he can excepte against, and therefore he putteth expreſſions into his Arguments, which be of his owne making; and them he quarells at, and shewes what great absurdities follow, when there is no ſuch thing in the Position; but I have followed him a little in owing his expreſſions, as farre as they will stand with the truth, v.i. That rejecting the means of Salvation, continuing in Sin, and unbeliefs, are in ſome meane ſe the caufe of Reprobation, and through the good hand of my God upon me, have proved it by the Scripture; and notwithstanding this man hath ſo ſtrongly oppoſed it in his two first Arguments, in answere to this Position, yet one would think by what he saith in this third Argument, that he were a little inclinable to be of my minde, or otherwise why doth he ſe those words (the only caufe) if hee do not in ſome meane graue these things to be a caufe of Reprobation.

3. To the Scripture which he quoth out of Rom. 9. 14. I have ſpoken to it already, and to that in Rom. 11. 33, 34. it speakek no regard to that pluar busines of Reprobation, but of that great love and tender respect that

God yet hath to Israel for the sachersakes, as doth appear from ver. 25. and so forward, and of the great things which shall be done for them in the latter days, when their Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; which great work of God in respect of the manner of it, is much mysterious, in as much as there is so much of the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, that his judgments to us are unsearchable, and his ways therein past finding out, until the fulness of time shall come, that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, Isa. 11. 9. And the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people which shall bee left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathres, and from Cus, and from E-lam, and from Chies, and from Hamath, and from the Islands of the sea, &c. ver. 11. to the end; but here I must break off, from saying any more of these things at present, for my leisure will not serve; and it is likely that this will call this Millenniumism, as he calleth the other Pelagianisme, and so I come to his fourth Argument, which is as followeth:

Arg. 4. If the fore-sight of sin and unbelief, and the rejecting of the means of Salvation, be the causes of Reprobation, then these absurdities will follow.

1. That no Child dying in infancy can possibly be reprobated.

2. Neither such Gentiles, as Turks, Indians, and Savages that never heard of Christ, who never enjoyed the Gospels, nor ever had the means tendered unto them, for how can they believe in him, on whom they never heard? Rom. 10. 10. and how can they reject that which was never tendered unto them? as many Nations in the world, who are strangers from the life of God, Ephes. 2. 12. and doubtless all mankind, by the time of the creation of man.

3. If the fore-sight of sin, should be the cause of Reprobation, then the Elect should be equally liable to the decree of Reprobation, as the Reprobates themselves, they all being alike in the corrupt mass and lump of Adams transgression, Rom. 9. 21. 22. 23. & 10. 15. 19. Ephes. 2. 3. 2. 3. Children of wrath as well as others, Rom. 9. 10. and yet 1. 20. None right come, against me, & I have made no man sin. Then Paul was mistaken, Rom. 9. 11. in not assigning sin to bee the cause of Reprobation. (q. 3. The same Apostle when answered very unsoundly to these Objections, Rom. 9. 19. the first time, did God reprobated Esau because he hated him, he was unjust.)

The second answer, 19. Why doth he yes finde fault, for who hath resisted his will before he might there nōd have answered to both the Objections, and said, that sin was the cause of reprobating both Esau and Pharaoh; but he did so.

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faith the contrary, ver. 13. when they had done neither good nor evil, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.

6 Hereby we confine Gods infinite Sovereignty over the Creatures, to the narrow scantling of our subordinate power, as though he might not do with his own what he lust, without our controle, and not make a vessel either to honour or dishonour, unless he were accountable to us for a reason of his so doing.

*Answ.* I cannot but take notice of his evil dealing in the making of his Arguments, that he should make no less than ten Arguments against two Positions, and not one in all the ten that answereth to either of them; now as I have said before, I must be constrained to say yet once more, that the Position doth not say, *That the fore-sight of sin and unbelief, and the rejection of the means of Salvation be the causes of Reprobation;* but the Position saith, *God saw some men rejecting the means of Salvation,* to wit, the free tenders of Christ in the Gospel, continuing in sin and unbelief, &c. which word *continuing,* is forgotten, and not mentioned in all the Arguments; but I must not забаre him that expression, **CONTINUING,** lest I should be guilty of letting the truth suffer through my negligence; for if he had put that expression into his Argument, and framed his Argument accordingly, to have answered the Position as it lieth, there could not one absurdity have followed; but yet I shall examine the absurdities particularly, to see whether they follow from the Position, or from any thing that we hold, or whether they will all prove to be absurdities, yes, or no.

#### 1. Absurdity answered.

And I shall compare the first absurdity, as he calleth it, with the sixth, or last absurdity, which he putteth to his sixth Argument, in answer to the second Position, yiz. *God saw some men imbracing the means of Salvation, those he elected in Christ, &c.* and there he giveth out as if such an absurdity must needs follow, that no Children dying in infancy could be saved, saying, *What then would become of children dying in infancy, before they had the use of faith, or works, or any imbracing of the means, and which never had a being to act?* and to this he saith, that such an absurdity as this, *won't needs follow, that no childe dying in infancy can possibly bee reprobated;* now whether two such different things can follow these two Positions, I shall leave to the judgement of others that have understanding.

To the first of these, he seemeth to make their election to eternal life very doubtful, if at all possible, and the ground or reason is, because that children dying in infancy, have not the use of faith, or works, &c.

I am constrained to be the larger in answering these Arguments, because I cannot but a little follow him, that I may finde him out in his crooked ways.

that so he may be discovered; and therefore I cannot but take notice of this expression, before they had the use of faith; by which one would think that the man is of that opinion that faith comes by generation, because his words do seem to intimate as if Infants had faith, but not the use of faith; but Paul certaintly was of another minde, when hee said, *Faith cometh by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17.

But whereas he seemeth to make it to be a very doubtful thing, if not altogether impossible, that Children dying in infancy should be elected to Life and Salvation, from what we hold, I must tell him, there is great ground to hope, if not certainty whereby wee may believe, that no childe dying in Infancy before they come to have a being to act, shall ever bee cast into the Lake of fire, which is the second death; because they nor having the use of those facultieas Hearing, together with the use of reason, to understand what is spoken, and being not capable of any embracing of the means, and which never had a being to act; therefore they cannot reject the means of Salvation; and their not having of faith will never be charged upon them as sin, for where no law is, there is no transgression, Rom. 4. 15. and there can be no law to Infants, as such, because they cannot know it; when they are infants, and sin is not imputed when there is no law, Rom. 3. 13. and also we finde that Christ himself saith, Luke 18. 16. That of such is the Kingdom of God; and hath no where said that such are Reprobated to everlasting destruction, if he hath shew us where he hath spoken it in Scripture: or appointed it to be spoken by any of his Ministers. It is true, we find that we shall all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in HIS body, according to what he hath done; whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. 5. 10. but we do not finde that any shall receive any thing at the Day of Judgement as a punishment for what hath beenacted in the body of another, although we, 1 Cor. 15. 22. all dye, and go to the dust in the first Adam, in that all have sinned, or, in whom all have sinned, Rom. 5. vers. 12. compared with the Margin; and God himself hath declared against such inequality of proceedings, in Ezek. 18. 20. *The soul that sinneth it shall dye; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father*, &c. now that this was a dying, that was more than to dye, and go to the dust, it is evident, for all must undergo that, whether they be righteous, or unrighteous; and we finde, vers. 26. that when a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquitie, and dieth in them, hee shall dye; which doth imply, that it was a death, that is to be the portion of those that dye, and go to the dust in wickedness and impenitency; after that death, when the Judgement cometh, which is called in Scripture, *the second Death*, and it doth appear that that Death will not be the portion of any, for any thing that is asked in or by another, but for the wickedness and impenitency

scacy of every particular soul that liveth and dyeth therein.

And again, if this man be of the same mind, vith some of his brethren, as hee doth in some measure discover himself so to be by his words, which seem to imply that Infant-children have faith, although not the use of faith, which conceit of theirs, is usually grounded upon Mat. 18.6. These little ones which believe in me; from which words some of them do infer, that because Christ called a little childe unto him to set before his Disciples as a pattern of humility to them, therefore hee speaketh of such little children in respect of noage in vers.6. and if that bee so, then they must needs conclude that little children, as such, cannot bee reprobated, for saith Christ, vers.14. It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish: But this I do to see how the opinions of those men will hang together, for I do beleive that the little ones hee speaketh of in vers.6. and vers.14. are his Disciples, which are born from above, converted, and in conversation, in respect of innocency and humility, become as little children, whose qualifications, in respect of these things, are such as that the Lord Christ requireth the best of his people to bee but such; and thus wee own the latter of the two, which hee calleth, Absurdities, because it is a truth, viz. That no childe dying in infancy can possibly bee reprobated; for Reprobation is the portion of such as have the means of the knowledge of God, and his truth, which is the means of salvation, and do reject it; which Infants, as such, can never do; as hath been already proved.

But for the former, viz. That children dying in infancy before they have any being to act, should bee reprobated to everlasting destruction; hee shall never suffer us upon us, for it followeth not from any principle that wee hold, neither will it agree with the tender mercies of our God, who hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and therefore not in the death of an innocent dying Infant; *For mercy rejoiceth against judgement.*

Absurd.2. Neither such Gentiles, or Turks, Indians, and Savages, that never heard of Christ, who never enjoyed the Gospel, &c.

Answ. To which I answer, First, by demanding why hee concludeth, That there be some such Gentiles that never heard of Christ, &c. The Apostle Paul delivereth Doctrine contrary to this saying, Have they not all heard, yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world, Rom. 10.18. and Chap.16. 25,26. speaking of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, & **IT NOW** is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all Nations for the obedience of faith. How then is it that this man saith, That there be such Gentiles or Turks, and the like, that never heard of Christ, if hee hath been among such, pretending himself

himself to bee a Minister of Christ , hee should have preached Christ unto them , but I am perswaded that hee groundeth what hee saith upon a report of some History of Travellers , or the like , and from thence there is as good ground to conclude , that they may hear of Christ , and that there are Christians in this part of the world , which worship that God that is the Creator of all things by Jesus Christ . as there is for us to conclude , that there is a Mahomet , which the Turks do beleieve in , and that there are Indians and Savages , who are strangers from the life of God , and that worship the creature more than the Creator : For certainly they may as well hear what we are , and what we do , as we can hear what they are , and what they do : And if they did but delight to retain that God in their knowledge , whom we worship , and to entertain that Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts , in whom we beleieve , without question they might know more of God , and his Son Christ then they do ; and this doth appear from the words of Christ , Luke 16.10,11. *He that is faithful in that which is least , is faithful also in much ; and he that is unjust in the least , is unjust also in much ; if therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon , who shal commit to your trust the true riches ?* And therefore if they were faithful in the use of that means which they do enjoy from God , without doubt they might know more of God than they do .

But pus the case it be granted , for Arguments sake , that they never heard of Christ , why then saith the man , *How shall they beleieve in him , of whom they have not heard , from Rom. 10.* And how can they reject that , which was never tendered unto them ?

Why then say I again , How have Infants faith , for they never heard of Christ as they are new born Infants ? And I say likewise , That if those Gentiles he speakest of never heard of Christ , nor yet could notwithstanding all that they could do in the use of that means they do enjoy , then their not knowing of Christ , and believing in him as wee do , will never be charged upon them as sin : For we do not finde that the Lord Jesus doth require the use of a talent of them , which never received any of him to use .

But the Gentiles if they cannot notwithstanding all that they can do , hear of Christ in the Doctrine of the Gospel in expreſſ words , yet they have a means from God by which they in their consciences may be accused or excused in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ , Rom. 2.14, 15,16. See also Chap. 1. from vers. 18. to the end . Also Psal. 19. at the beginning ; by which means there is ſuch a discovery of God from the creation of the world , that the inuifible things of him are clearly ſeen , being understood by the things that are made , ſo that they are without excuse , but not onely in far Countries , but even here in Eng land , where the Gospel is preached , there are

are many that are strangers from the life of God, I do freely grant, the greater is their sin ; and as it is just with God to give those Gentiles over to a reprobate minde, that did not like to retain that knowledge of God which they had, or might have had by the things that are made ; so in like manner will the just and righteous Judgement of God appear, toward them that have Jesus Christ preached unto them in the Doctrin of the Gospel, and they receive him not, in suffering the Mystery of Iniquity to cloud and darken their understandings, by the coming of the man of sin, 2 Thess. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. Whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceareableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, BECAUSE they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for this CAUSE, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye, that they all might bee damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness ; by which Mystery of Iniquity their understandings are so darkened, and their mindes blinded, by which they look that all must be in a Mystery ; removing Mountains in a Mystery, the Body of Christ in a Mystery, the Ascencion of Christ into Heaven, and his second coming in a Mystery, the Resurrection out of the Grave, or dust of the earth in a Mystery ; to be out of the grave of sin, and all these, and many more such dark and cloudy conceits there are, and will bee more and more in men, because they receive not the love of the truth, even the teaching of Jesus Christ in these things that are written, Job. 20. 31. That they might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing they might have life through his name.

### The third Absurdity.

If before sight of Sin should be the cause of Reprobation, then the elect should be equally liable to the decree of Reprobation, as the Reprobates themselves, they all being alike in the corrupt mass and lump of Adams transgression.

Answ. See how he minceth his Argument, that he may bring forth absurdities from his own expressions, and then fater them upon us. In the front of his Argument he putteth in unbelief, and the rejecting of the means, but leaveth out the word continuing, and now he hath thrust out all, except it be this one single term, Sin, that he may bring Reprobation to eternal destruction, to the narrow scantling of Adams Transgression, but that shall never bee granted by me, until I see a better proof for it than he hath yet brought, and I can allow him more Scriptures then he hath set down to his Argument, as Job 34. 4. & 15. 14. Psal. 51. 5. all which, together with the Scriptures hee bringeth, do I confess, prove that the whole lump of Mankind is polluted with sin ; and I deny not, but that this pollution, or corruption, is in a measure

from Adams transgression, but that any ones being Reprobated to everlasting destruction in the Lake of fire, which is the second Death, is for Adams transgression I deny, for although all the fruits and effects of that sin in the first Adam do accompany us, until we come to the dust from whence wee were taken, which is, Gen. 3. 16, 17, 18, 19. womans sorrow being multiplied, and their conception, and bringing forth children in sorrow, together with the Curse that is upon the ground for mans sake, so as that man must eat of it in sorrow all the days of his life, eating bread in the sweat of his face, being accompanied with pain and sickness, which are the companions of death, till hee return to the ground, *For out of it was he taken, for ( saith God ) dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return;* and this was the Sentence of that condemnation that God hath pronounced against the first *Adam*, or, 1 Cor. 15. 27. earthy man, and we being then in him when the sin was committed, and the sentence pronounced, we have our part with him in these things, as our portion in this life, for the Original sin, or first Transgression; *but the holy Spirit in Scripture doth nowhere as I could ever yet finde, nor as any one could ever yet shew me, that mans Reprobation to the second Death, is, for being in Adams sin, nor for sin in their own persons, no nor yet for unbelief simply so considered, but for CONTINUING in sin and unbelief, &c.* For if they do repent, confess and forsake their sins, and beleeve in Jesus, they shall finde mercy, and be saved, as hath been already proved; and if the Elect should continue in sin, and unbelief, and not repent, and beleeve, or imbrace the means of Salvation, they should be equally liable to the decree of Reprobation, as the Reprobates themselves, and there would bee no difference; but they, in repenting, beleeving, and imbracing the means of Salvation, fall under the unchangeable decree of Gods election, so as that they cannot miss of Salvation, as hath been already shewed.

But yet least it should be thought that there is some weight in that Scripture which he quoteth out of *Ephes. 2. 1, 2, 3.* *Children of wrath even as others,* to prove that Reprobation to the second Death, is for that sin in *Adam*, or that Infants dying in infancy, should bee cast into the Lake of Fire for the same, I doubt not, but by the help of my God I shall make it appear, that there is no such thing in it; for First, consider that these words in vers. 1. *You hath he quickned who were dead in trespasses and sins,* cannot relate to their being in the corrupt mass or lump of Adams Transgression, for that is but one being in the singular number, but that which is there spoken of, is in the plural number, or more than one, to wit, *Trespasses and Sins.*

Secondly, It doth appear that it doth not relate to that sin they had as they were new born Infants, because it relargeth to their conversation, or course of life, as they had a being in this world, vers. 2.3. *Wherein in time past yee walked*

walked according to the course of this world, among whom we all had our conversation in times past, &c. By which it doth appear, that he doth not speak to the *Ephesians* of what they were as they first came into the world as Infants; for they could not upon that account be said to walk according to the course of this world, neither can new born Infants, as such, bee said to have their conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, and of the minde, and therefore they were not children of wrath upon that account, but the Apostle there speaketh of that course of life, or conversation, in which they lived in, in time past, as they were grown persons in the lusts of the flesh, and of the minde, fulfilling the desires thereof, and being by nature the children of wrath even as others.

But now the question is, *How they were by nature children of wrath?* say some, Because nature, led them to the doing of these things, and to the living in such a filthy conversation.

But I have better thoughts of nature, and yet I desire to think no better of it, than the Scripture speaketh of it, and my judgement of it, is this, *That nature is so far from leading men into sin, that the teachings of it are against sinne*, which I prove by these Reasons, being grounded upon Scripture.

1 Because the *Gentiles* do by nature the things contained in the Law of God, Rom. 2. 14.

2 Because those that were given over of God to a reprobate minde, being filled with all unrighteousness, Rom. 1. 28. are said vers. 31. to bee without natural affections. Now if natural affections had been such an unrighteous thing, as that it should lead them into sin, and they being filled with all unrighteousness, could not have been without it.

3 Because the Apostle *Paul* himself directeth the Saints to the teaching of nature it self, Cor. 11. 14. And certainly, if *Paul* had been of that minde, that nature had been such an evill principle, as that it being followed, would lead them into a wicked and filthy conversation, he would never have mentioned it as a teacher unto them; therefore the teaching of nature doth not lead men into sin, but the contrary.

But as the Law written in tables of stone, did discover, or make known sin to the *Jews*, so the Law of nature did discover, or make known sin to the *Gentiles*, and so the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and all unrighteousnes of men, as well the *Gentiles* as the *Jews*, as appeareth Rom. 1. 18, &c. And as the Law written doth work wrath to the *Jews*, Rom. 4. 15. when they sin against it; So the Law of nature doth work wrath to the *Gentiles*, when they do that which is contrary thereunto, and so the *Ephesians* which *Paul* directeth these words unto, being *Gentiles*, were

not lead into sin by nature, but nature did in its measure and degree, witness against sin, and did by its teaching, declare them to bee the children of wrath, when they lived in such an evill conversation, which was contrary to the teaching of it.

Absurd.4. Then Paul was mistaken, Rom.9.11. in not assigning sin to be the cause of Reprobation.

Answ. Paul was not mistaken, for he hath assigned continuing in sin, and unbelief to bee the cause of Reprobation, Rom.9.32. and 11.20. and 1. 26 28.

Absurd.5. The same Apostle then answered very unsoundly to these Objections, Rom.9.13.19.

The first is, If God reprobated Esau, because he hated him, he was unjust.

The second vers.19. Why doth hee yet finde fault, for who hath resisted his will? For he might in one word have answered to both the Objections, and said, That sin was the cause of Reprobating both Esau and Pharaoh, but he saith the contrary, vers.11. When they had done neither good nor evill, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.

Answ. To the first when I shall hear any say, That God reprobated Esau because he hated him, without assigning any other cause, and prove it, I shall say more to it, and in the mean time, I shall desire to have this Question resolved.

Whether those that shall preach such doctrine, As that God reprobated Esau, because he hated him, and for no other cause, do not make God much like the envious Jews, Job.15.25. who hated the man Christ Jesus without cause?

To the second, I have already shewed, That Paul directed his words to the Jew, who rested in the Law, and made his boast of God, and was confident that he was in the way of God; and thence it was, that hee said, Thou wilt say unto me, Who hath resisted his will? But Paul had more than that single terme sin, to assigne as a cause of their being reprobated, blinded, or broken off from their own Olive tree, to wit, a continuance in sin, and unbelief, and rejecting the means of salvation, when the hands of the Lord were stretched forth unto them all the day long, and yet they were a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Absurd.6. Hereby we confine Gods infinite Sovereignty over the creatures to the narrow scantling of our subordinate power, as though he might not do with his own what he list, without our controle, and not make a vessel either to honour or dishonour, unless he were accountable to us for a reason of his so doing.

Answ.

*Answ.* We confine not Gods infinite Sovereignty over his creatures, to any subordinate power in man whatsoever, neither doth any principle that we hold, tend to the limiting the holy One of Israel in the least, in the disposing his creature any other wayes than it seemeth good in his own good will and pleasure to do, as hath been by me already made to appear.

For as I have already granted, so I say yet again, That God might have left his creature, man, in that lost condition that his own sin had brought him into, and needed not to have been countable to any for a reason of his so doing; but it was merely the good will and pleasure of our God to bee moved onely from that fountain of love that was, and yet is in himself, to give forth his Son Christ to dye for all, and taste death for every man, and that all whatsoever was in man, or acted by man, did not merit the least drop of the blood of Christ, but by the grace of God it came freely, and hee might have withheld that great mercy from his creature, and needed not in the least have been countable to any for a reason of his so doing; but through the good pleasure of God. *The Lord Jesus is that Lamb of God that was in the purpose and decree of God, Rev.13.8. slain from the foundation of the world;* which purpose, and decree of God was put into execution in the fulness of time for our everlasting good; and notwithstanding, wee could not in the least have looked for these things from God as a debt, yet it hath been the pleasure of God by grace, to send his Son into the world, and to make known the mystery of his will in these things, and freely to give us an account, or shew unto us a reason of his so doing, which will appear plainly in the resolving these following Questions by the express words of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, without either inference, or comment.

*Quest. 1. Wherfore did God give his only begotten Son, or send his Son into the world?*

*Answ.* That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, *Job.3.16.* And that the world through him might be saved, *vers.17.*

*Quest. 2. Wherefore did Jesus Christ come a light into the world?*

*Answ.* That all men through him might believe, *Job.1.7.* And that whosoever believeth on him should not abide in darkness, *Job.12.46.*

*Quest. 3. Wherefore was Jesus Christ delivered to death?*

*Ans.* For our offences, *Rom.4.25.*

*Quest. 4. Wherefore was he raised again?*

*Ans.* For our Justification.

These, and many more of this nature that might bee mentioned, are laid down in Scripture as grounds and reasons, whereby it hath been the pleasure of God to be accountable unto us, wherefore he hath done these great things

for us, not in order to the limitation of himself to any subordinate power in us, but in order to the accomplishment of his own will and pleasure for our good.

And so in like manner Gods disposing of his creature, either in making of vessels of honour, or dishonour, is not in respect of any confinement of his Sovereignty over his creatures to any subordinate power in us, but the confinement of himself therein, is to his purpose, decree, and promise, which must stand, and cannot bee disannulled; so that the question now is not, What God might have done with his creature being once at liberty: but that which wee are to take notice of, is, *How he hath disposed, or doth dispose thereof, as having freely, and voluntarily bound and ingaged himself therunto, by purpose, decree, and promise,* Isa. 14.27. *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* So that what God, for ought that wee know, might have done with his creature, being once at liberty, cannot now by him be done, he having bound himself, as aforesaid.

Take but this one instance for the further illustration of this to bee a truth; God might, if it had been his pleasure to have kept himself at liberty, for ought that we know, have destroyed the world with the waters of a flood, since the flood that was in the dayes of Noah, but since it hath been the pleasure of God freely to enter into a Covenant with all flesh, Gen.9.9, 10, 11. yea with every living creature, and to make a promise, that all flesh should be cut off no more by the waters of a flood, neither should there any more be a flood to destroy the earth; therefore now he cannot destroy the earth so any more, because he changeth not, neither can lie.

And so it cometh to pass, That those two different events which do, or shall befall the sons of men, which is salvation to all that sort or kinde of people that do imbrace the means, and beleieve in Jesus Christ; and reprobation, and everlasting destruction to the other sort or kinde of people that do continue in sin and unbelife, rejecting the means of salvation; and these two different events come to pass according to the purpose and decree of God, which was from before the foundation of the world; but this decree of God which was before time, doth not necessitate the different actings of men that come forth in their generations in time, which is the penitency, faithfulness, and obedience of those that thereby come to bee under the Decree of Election to everlasting life; nor the impenitency, unbelief, and disobedience of those that for that cause, fall under the decree of Reprobation to everlasting destruction; no more than the Law or Decree that was made by the Governors of this Nation, many Ages and Generations past, concerning the protection of honest men, and the punishment of them that do evil: But as the Decree that was made

as aforesaid, many Ages and Generations past; since it was made, is yet of a tendency and conduceinent, if it be considered of, to lead all men to live honestly: So the Decree of God that was before time, and published or made known to the sons of men in time, is so far from the necessitating men to do wickedly, viz. To continue in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting the means of salvation, that it is of such a tendency and conduceinent upon the right consideration thereof, in respect of the great benefit on the one hand, to be the portion of penitent and obedient persons, belieeving in Jesus Christ, and the great woe and misery on the other hand, that doth, and will befall all those that continue in sin and unbelief, and reject the means of salvation, that it doth, I say, being considered of, as aforesaid, tend strongly to the perswading of all ungodly persons, speedily to break off their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by cleaving unto Jesus Christ. in belieeving and walking in the truth, and undoubtedly they shall be saved.

And as God hath thus bound himself, by his purpose, decree, and promise, to the doing of the things aforesaid, that so they must come to pass in their season, and it being also his pleasure to let the sons of men enjoy a sufficiency of means while the day of Grace lasteth, to bee used by them in order to their everlasting good, so hee giveth them liberty in the right use thereof, in that day of Grace, to choose or refuse; and it cannot be otherwise, for a choice must needs be at liberty, and if there were not a liberty given of God in these things, then those expressions in Scripture were in vain, as in Deut. 30. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life.*

*Object.* But to this it will be objected, That that which they might choose, or refuse, was the temporal or earthly Canaan.

*Ans.* That there was such a thing intended in it, I deny not, but that was not all, for in those typical things that did belong to them as they were the children of Abraham according to the flesh, there was held forth that which did lead them up to faith in Christ, in order to their being the children of Abraham also by faith, that so they might be heirs also of the heavenly inheritance, and this the words immediately going before do prove, being compared with what Paul had said, Rom. 10. for as it is said, Deut. 30. vers. 14. *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it;* the very same word is said by Paul, Rom. 10. vers. 8. *To bee the word of faith which they preached;* and we finde the like of Moses, Heb. 11. 24, 25. *He refused to be called the Son of Pharaohs daughter, CHOOSING rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season:* Alio Luke 10. 42. *Mary hath CHOSEN that good part:* And thus when men and women come to repent, and be changed from dead works

works, and so imbrace the means of salvation, and believe in Jesus Christ; they then come to be such a sort or kinde of people, That it was in the purpose and decree of God, which was from before the foundation of the world to elect, justifie, and in the end eternally to save, and the decree of God, which was from before time, cometh to be actually put in execution upon them, in order to their being made vessels of honour when they come to imbrace the means as aforesaid, and will be fully accomplished, when it shall be said unto them, *Mat. 25.34. Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* And this is that which God hath done, not in order to any confinement of himself to any subordinate power in us, but in order to the doing of that which hee purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began for our good; and it hath been the good will and pleasure of God to bee so far accountable unto us of these things for our comfort and consolation in Christ Jesus, that if any shall say unto us, *Who bee the vessels of mercy, which God hath afore prepared unto glory?* that we can say, *Rom. 9.24. Even us whom hee hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles:* Yea it hath been the good will and pleasure of our God, so to make known the mystery of his will unto us in Scripture, that hee or they, whosoever they bee, that do with delight imbrace the means of salvation, and retain the words of Christ, and not *Heb. 2.1. (See the margin) let them slip, or run out as leaking vessels, and 2 Tim. 2.21. purge themselves from error, sin, and uncleanness, shall bee vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work.* And wee do finde in Scripture, that all these actings of God in a way of mercy, in order to the everlasting good of his creature come from him with abundance of willingness, freenes, and delight, *For he is a God that delighteth in mercy, Mic. 7.18.*

But on the other hand, in respect of what hee doth in the making forth of his justice in the punishment of his creature, for sin and impenitency, he doth it not untill he is provoked thereunto, *Even 2 Chron. 36. 16. untill there is no remedy;* *For the Lord is Psal. 119.8. & 145.8. slow to anger, and of great mercy,* and bath *Ezek. 33.11. no pleasure in the death of the wicked:* And therefore although that the imbracing of the means, repenting and believing in Jesus Christ, be no procuring ground, or cause of any the least mercies we do enjoy; yet the continuing in sin and unbelief, and the rejecting the means of salvation, is a procuring cause of punishment. See *Jer. 2.17. Hast thou not procured this unto thy self, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way.* Also *Chap. 4.18. Thy way and thy doings hath procured these things unto thee, this is thy wickedness, because it reacheth unto thine heart:* And I can yet remember, when I have been a hearer

bitter of those men which have taken unto themselves the Title of Clergy, as if they only were the heritage of God, and none besides them speak much to this purpose, when they happen to speak the truth at unawares, when it fell in their way, saying to this purpose, *That God was abundantly more prone to shew mercy, than to execute his wrath;* and have earnestly prest their hearers to the use of means, calling upon them to be careful to come to Church, as they call it, and to hear Sermons, saying, Thou doest not know when Gods time is, therefore give attendance to the means, if thou art careless in coming, and wilt come but now and then, thou mayest bee absent when Gods time was to call thee, and then thou art undone, thou must never look for the like time again; and such like doctrine as this, which soundeth like the truth, but contrary to their own principles, and disputed against by this man in his Arguments.

But whatsoever they say or hold, the Scripture will sufficiently prove *Hos. 13.9. 2 Pet. 2.1.* mans destruction to be of himself, and that Gods act of reprobating of persons, blinding of their eyes, hardening their hearts, and breaking them off from the Olive tree, Christ Jesus, is for refusing to hearken to his counsel in time while the day of grace lasteth, for although he through grace and mercy, doth give men liberty to choose life, yet it must not be in their own time, nor in their own way, but in Gods time, and in Gods way; and therefore it is that peoples not embracing of the free tenders of Christ in the Gospel in their day of grace come to be under the Decree of Reprobation, and the execution thereof falleth upon them, for they are vessels of wrath that God, *Rom. 9.22.* endureth with much long suffering, and they *Rom. 2.4.5.* despising the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering, which led them to repentance, and so treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God: And thus in abusing this much long-suffering of God, and rejecting the means of salvation, continuing in sin and unbelief, untill their day of grace is at an end, they come to be fitted for destruction, even fit objects for his wrath to work upon, as the earth which drinketh in the rain which cometh oft upon it, and yet beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned: And this is according to the account that God hath given us in Scripture of these things, as will appear by resolving of these following Questions, with the express words of the same.

Quest. 1. *Why were the things of the peoples peace hid from their eyes?*

Answ. Because they knew not the time of their visitation, *Luke 19.*

44.

Quest. 2. *Why did God break them off from their own Olive Tree?*

G

Answ.

The Free Grace of God vindicated.

Answ. Because of unbelief, Rom. 11.30.

Quest. Why did they not attain to the Law of righteousness?

Answe. Because they sought it not by faith, Rom. 9.32.

Quest. 4. Wherefore did God give up the Gentiles to uncleanness, and to vile affections?

Answe. Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.

Quest. 5. Wherefore did God give them over to a Reprobate mind?

Answe. Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, Rom. 1.28.

This is that which God hath been pleased to make us acquainted with, as a true account of his dealing with, or disposing of his creature, not in order to any limitation or confinement of his Sovereignty over his creatures to any subordinate power in us, but according to what he hath been pleased to confine himself unto, by his purpose and decree, and that which hee hath done, and doth do, in these things is in order to the execution and accomplishment of the same purpose and decree, that so his Rom. 1.17,18. Righteousness might be revealed in the Gospel to his faithful people, to their great joy and comfort in believing; and the revelation of the righteous judgement of God from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

And therefore, that which we hold, doth not in the least confine Gods infinite Sovereignty over his creatures to any subordinate power in us, nor to the doing of any thing in the least, more than what it hath been his pleasure to confine himself to the doing of, by purpose, decree, and declaration of the same in the Scriptures of truth, which cannot be disannulled; and therefore this man may suffer this absurdity, together with the rest of them that he hath endeavoured to cast upon us, and the truth that wee profess, upon those to whom they do belong.

Some other Positions there were written, and some of them hee saith may pass with a grain of salt, and some, which hee doth not well understand the meaning of, wanting as he saith an *Oedipus* to unriddle the meaning of using scornful and deriding expressions, saying, *The Novice leadeth him in a mist*, and the like: and yet he frameth some Arguments against them shooting as hee saith, at adventure, and yet they fall from him, as if they were shot against the truth, but at present not being very well at leisure, and also under the envious dealings of Sathan, I shall let them rest, and commend what I have here done to consideration, if he have but the patience to read it with an impartial eye, and with a single and upright minde, without a spirit of prejudice against it,

spect of the homeliness of the expressions, because they are not full of  
Cor. 2. 1, 2, 3. excellency of speech, and the enticing words of mans wis-  
dome, and Theological expressions : I shall conclude all at present with these  
insuing Queries, which waiteth for an answer, &c.

1 **W**Hether it can bee proved from the Word of God, that the fall  
which we had in the first Adam, were any further than to the dust,  
from whence we were taken ?

2 Whether it be not improper, to say, that we dyed in the first Adam a  
spiritual death, when the Scripture doth say, That that was not first  
which was Spiritual, but that which was Natural, and afterwards that which  
is Spiritual ? 1 Cor. 15.

3 Whether there need to bee any talk at all of any wisdom, power, or  
strength of our own, when it is by all granted, that wee have our life and  
being in Jesus Christ, and have nothing that we have not received ?

4 Whether God the Father have any other end or design, in giving us  
or sending his Son into the world, but only that the world through him  
might be saved ?

5 Whether the Elect are at all in the Scripture demonstrated under any  
such term as that word world ?

6 Whether the Lord Jesus Christ doth use, or exercise any other power  
in bringing of men and women to believe, to the saving of their souls, but  
that which may be resisted, or rejected ?

7 Whether Gods Decree before the foundation of the world, be any other  
thing but that Believers should be saved, and unbelievers should bee dam-  
ned ?

8 Whether God can be said to Judge the world in Righteousness, and  
yet Condemn those for unbelief which never had power to believe ?

9 How can the Saints be said to judge the world righteously, if they are  
carried on to believe by a power which they cannot resist, and those that are  
to be judged by them, cannot believe for want of the same power ?

10 Whether if the Salvation of some, and the Condemnation of others  
be necessitated by the Decree of God, without any respect at all to obedience  
or disobedience, then to what end is it said in the Scriptures of truth, that  
men did, or might chuse, or refuse ?

11 Whether is Unbelief the cause of Reprobation, or Reprobation the  
cause of Unbelief ?

12 Whether it be not Sin, to say, That the secret will of God is not ac-  
cording to his revealed will ?

13 Whether that opinion which some men hold concerning God bee not  
damnable, namely, to say that God declareth in his Word, that he would  
have all men to bee saved by his Son, and yet never intendeth that they  
should be saved?

14 Whether there bee any Gospel to be preached to that man, or woman,  
for whom God never intended Salvation in the death of his Son; and if there  
be any, then I would know what Gospel it is, and who they are that should  
preach it?

15 Whether Condemnation to the Second Death, or Lake of fire was e-  
ver threatened but for personal rejection of the means afforded?

16 Whether those that perish to eternity, might not have been saved, had  
they in their day improved the means afforded?

17 Whether any can beleieve that Christ dyed for him upon a Scripture  
account, except he beleieve that Christ dyed for all.

18 Whether Gods opening a door of salvation to all the sons of men, will  
not make his Righteousness appear glorious in Judgement?

19 How can a man be said to refuse, that which hee never was in a possi-  
bility to receive?

20 Doth not Christ's bemoaning persons in the state of Unbelief, plainly  
argue they might beleieve?

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F I N I S.